THE HISTORY OF ROME,

FROM

THE FOUNDATION OF THE CITY

TILL

THE TERMINATION OF THE EASTERN EMPIRE.

By WILLIAM MAVOR, LL.D.

VICAR OF HURLEY IN BERKSHIRE, AND CHAPLAIN TO THE EARL OF DUMFRIES.

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THIS SECOND VOLUME

OF

THE ROMAN HISTORY,

IS,

WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF RESPECT,

INSCRIBED,

BY

HIS LORDSHIP'S

MOST FAITHFUL AND OBEDIENT

HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE EDITOR.

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OF VOL. II.

THE

ROMAN HISTORY.

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From the Establishment of the First ... *the Death of Pompey.*

AT this period, the commonwealth might be said to be composed of three different bodies, each actuated by separate interests. The triumvirate aiming at sovereign authority, were desirous, by depressing the senate and cajoling the people, to extend their own influence. The senate, equally apprehensive of the three great men who controlled them, and of the people who opposed them, formed a middle interest between both; and being intent on re-establishing the aristocracy which had been set up by Sylla, their struggles were dignified with the name of freedom. The people on the other hand were anxious for liberty, in the most extensive sense, and, with a fatal blindness, only apprehensive of the invasion of it from the side of the senate, gave all their influence to the triumvirate, whose promises were as magnificent as their pretences were specious.

Cæsar's first object upon being taken into the triumvirate was to obtain the consulship. The senate had still some small influence left; and though they were obliged to concur in choosing him, yet they gave him for a colleague one of their partisans named Bibulus, who, they supposed, would be a check upon his power. But, the opposition was too strong for even superior abilities to resist it; so that Bibulus, after a slight attempt in favour of the senate, remained inactive, the remainder of the year. Cæsar, however, was by no means so; he began his schemes for empire, by ingratiating himself with the people; and accordingly he preferred a law for dividing certain lands in Campania, among the poor citizens who had at least three children. This proposal was criminal only from the views of the proposer. The senate, however, being resolved to oppose him in all his schemes, endeavoured to thwart him in this, which only served to exasperate the people still more against them. The multitude drove them by force from the place of assembling: Cato and Bibulus, who were most active against the law, were compelled to retire; and the rest of the senate took a forced oath to confirm the observance of it. During this struggle, Pompey and Crassus became the dupes of their associate: driving the law forward with all their activity and interest. The former publicly declared, that, if any would come, as he was informed they would, with swords to oppose it, he would be the first to lift up his shield in its defence. By this conduct he lost all his former influence in the senate, while Cæsar alone gained all the popularity of a law, which was of his own proposing. From that time he

acted entirely without the assistance of his colleague; so that in merriment it was called the consulship of Julius and Cæsar; intimating that all things were done by his sole agency.

Having thus ingratiated himself with the people; his next step was, to procure the favour of the knights. These had for many years been the financiers or farmers of the public revenue; and by this means, had acquired vast riches: however, they now began to complain of their inability to pay the stipulated sums into the treasury. Cæsar procured a law to abate a third part of their rents, notwithstanding the opposition of the senate. In this manner, having advanced his influence among the lower orders of the state, he determined to attach Pompey still more closely, to him, by giving him his daughter Julia in marriage;—a woman endowed with every accomplishment that could tend to cement their confederacy, or endear the conjugal chain.

Thus strengthened at home, he next deliberated with his confederates, about dividing the foreign provinces of the empire among them.—Pompey chose Spain for his part. Being satiated with military fame, he wished to enjoy his pleasures at Rome; and he knew, that this province could be easily governed by a lieutenant. Crassus chose Syria for his part of the empire; which province, as it had hitherto enriched the generals who had subdued it, would, he hoped, gratify him in his favourite object, the accumulation of wealth. To Cæsar were left the provinces of Gaul; composed of many fierce and powerful nations, most of them unsubdued, and the rest only professing a nominal subjection.

tion. Wherefore this government was granted for five years; as if, by its continuance, to compensate for its danger.

Having thus divided the empire, they prepared for their respective destinations. But previously to Cæsar's setting out, there was still an obstacle to his aims, which he wished to have removed. This was Tullius Cicero, who continued a watchful guardian over the few remaining liberties of Rome. This great orator and statesman, as well as excellent philosopher, had, from a very humble original, raised himself to the foremost rank of the state, by his wisdom, and all the virtues that could adorn a man. His worst and his only foible was vanity, which displayed itself in a desire of uniting in himself incompatible qualities, which sometimes gave an air of ridicule to his greatest actions. Thus, while he was indisputably the first orator in the state, he was eager also to be thought the best jester; while he taught men to contemn vanity, he was seen earnestly intriguing for the honour of a triumph, which, however, as a military man he had done nothing to merit. Though no man saw through the corruption of the times more clearly than he, yet he cherished the laudable hope of governing so venal a commonwealth without fraud. Though he penetrated into the character of every person he conversed with, yet he suffered himself to be the dupe of many, rather than recede from the rectitude of his aims. It was no wonder, therefore, that Cæsar was desirous of expelling from the republic a character so unlike his own. To effect this, he resolved to take into his party Publius Clodius, a man of patrician birth, of dissolute

dissolute manners, great popularity, and an inveterate enemy of Cicero. Beside an opposition of principles, a chief cause of their enmity was, Cicero's having formerly appeared against him upon his trial before the people, for an offence against the matrons of Rome, upon whose mysteries he had obtruded in female attire. At this time, he was a tribune of the people, though he had been obliged to get himself adopted by a plebeian, before he could obtain that office. The hope of revenging himself on Cicero, in some measure incited him to stand for it; and the concurrence of Cæsar and Pompey with his pretensions, soon assured him of success. He, therefore, publicly began to accuse Cicero, for having put the late conspirators to death; who, being citizens, ought to have been adjudged by the people. Cicero, terrified at this malicious accusation, for which indeed he deserved praise, did all that lay in his power to oppose it. He applied to Cæsar to be taken as his lieutenant into Gaul. But Clodius had art enough to divert him from that design, by pretending that his resentment was rather a matter of form than of reality. Pompey, too, contributed to put him off his guard by a promise of protection: so that the cunning of these men of moderate abilities was more than a match for the wisdom of the philosopher. The train being now laid; Clodius first caused a law to be enacted, importing, that any who had condemned a Roman citizen unheard, should himself be banished; and soon after impeached Cicero upon it. It was in vain that this great man went up and down the city, soliciting his cause in the habit of a suppliant, and attended by many of

the most eminent young noblemen whom he had taught the rules of eloquence. Those powers of oratory which had been so often successful in defending the cause of others, seemed totally to forsake him in his own. By the basest ingratitude and tergiversation of the people, he was banished four hundred miles from Italy; his houses were ordered to be demolished; and his goods set up to sale. None now remained that could defend the part of the senate but Cato; and he was shortly after sent into Cyprus, under pretence of doing him an honour; but in reality, in order to leave an open theatre for the triumvirate to act in. Cæsar, during these intrigues, though the principal actor, pretended to be an unconcerned spectator, and to be wholly occupied in preparations for entering on his province. He, in fact, left nothing undone, that might advance the speed, or increase the strength of this expedition. Then, leaving Pompey to guard their mutual interests at home, he marched into Gaul at the head of four legions, which were granted him by the senate, and two more that were lent him by his new associate in the empire.

It would be impossible, in this place, to enumerate all the battles Cæsar fought, and the states he subdued, in his expeditions into Gaul and Britain, during a period of eight years. He has himself given a detail of them in his Commentaries, a work which does as much honour to his abilities as a writer, as his conduct did to his talents as a general. Suffice it to say, that the Helvetians were the first who were brought into subjection, with the loss of near two hundred thousand men; while those who remained

after

after the carnage, were sent by Cæsar, in safety to the forests, from whence they had issued. The Germans, with Ariovistus at their head, were next cut off, to the number of eighty thousand; their monarch himself narrowly escaping in a little boat across the Rhine. The Belgæ then received such a terrible overthrow, and so great was the slaughter, that marshes and deep rivers were rendered passable on the heaps of carnage. The Nervians, who were the most warlike of those barbarous nations, made head for a short time, and fell upon the Romans with such fury, that their army was in danger of being utterly routed: but Cæsar, hastily catching up a buckler, rushed through his army into the midst of the enemy, by which means the face of affairs was so effectually changed, that the barbarians were cut off to a man. The Celtic Gauls, who were powerful at sea, were next brought under subjection; and after them, the Suevi, the Menapii, and all the nations from the Mediterranean to the British sea.

From thence, stimulated by the desire of conquest, and of visiting a country hitherto little known by any foreign nations, except the Carthaginians, he crossed over into Britain upon pretence that the natives had furnished his enemies with supplies. Upon approaching the shores, he found them covered with men to oppose his landing; and his forces were in danger of being driven back, till the standard-bearer of the tenth legion boldly leaped ashore; and, he being supported by the general, the natives were put to flight. The Britons, terrified at Cæsar's power, soon sent to desire a peace: which was granted them, and hos- A. C. 54.

tages

tages were delivered. A storm soon after destroying great part of the Roman fleet, they resolved to take advantage of the disaster, and marched against the invaders with a powerful army. But what could a naked undisciplined army do against forces that had been exercised under the greatest generals, and hardened by the conquest of the greatest part of the world? Being overthrown, they were obliged once more to sue for peace; which Cæsar granted them, on terms of increased severity; and then returned to the Continent. His absence once more inspired the Britons, naturally fond of liberty, with a resolution to renounce the Roman power; and in a second expedition, by repeated victories, Cæsar so intimidated their general Cassibelaunus; that he no longer endeavoured to resist in the plains; but, keeping in the forests, evinced a resolution to protract the war. However, Cæsar pursuing him closely, and crossing the Thames with his army, so straitened him, that he was obliged to submit to the conqueror's conditions, who imposed an annual tribute, and took hostages for its payment. Thus, in less than nine years, he conquered, together with Britain, all that country which extends from the Mediterranean to the German sea. It is said, that in these expeditions he took eight hundred cities; subdued three hundred different states; overcame three millions of men, one of which fell on the field of battle, and one was made prisoners of war. These unjust conquests, and this unpovoked destruction of mankind, ought certainly to be regarded with detestation. But they were then considered as the height of human virtue; and even at this period,

period; when an advanced state of morals, and the profession of a benevolent religion, should teach other lessons, unthinking men still exult in the destruction of their kind, and join in plaudits to the conqueror.

While Cæsar was thus increasing his reputation and riches abroad, Pompey, who remained all the time at Rome, steadily co-operated with his ambition, and advanced the interests of his rival, while he vainly supposed he was forwarding his own. Upon the first news of Cæsar's great exploits, he procured a decree of the senate for a solemn festival of fifteen days; which honour no general had ever received before; and on a variety of other occasions supported the interest of the conqueror of Gaul, in opposition to the wiser dictates of Cato, who had almost lost his life in an ineffectual attempt to curb the triumviral power. A. C. 52.

At length, Pompey, after the most vigorous though impolitic support, began to be roused from his lethargy, by the rising reputation of Cæsar. The fame of that great commander's valour, riches, and humanity, secretly gave him pain. He feared nothing so much as an equal in glory; and yet by his own exertions he had raised Cæsar's credit so high that he was now threatened with a superior. He, therefore, began to do all in his power to diminish Cæsar's reputation, by spreading disadvantageous reports, and lessening even his just fame. At this juncture, Julia, the daughter of Cæsar and the wife of Pompey died. She had, during her life, not a little contributed to cement the harmony between her father and her husband; but from the moment of her death Pompey resolved

solved to pursue his own advancement, and to depress that of his rival.

However, this great man for some time concealed his intention; but another fatal accident tended to hasten the rupture between him and Cæsar;--this was the death of Crassus. He had eagerly engaged in a war with the Parthians; hoping by the reduction of this powerful nation to satiate his avarice, gratify his ambitious views, and render himself equal to his two associates in military glory. He conducted the war, however, with so little prudence, that he suffered the enemy to get the advantage of him in almost every skirmish; and at last fell a sacrifice to his own rashness, and the treachery of the foe; and with him perished the flower of the Roman army.

Notwithstanding Pompey's resolution to lessen the authority of Cæsar, upon examination of strength, he found his efforts were now too late. Cæsar was in possession of that popularity which it had been the business of his life to obtain: he was loved almost to adoration by his army; whose attachment he had gained by his humanity and generosity. He seemed to acquire immense riches, only to bestow them on the bravest and most deserving of his soldiers: he paid the debts of many of his officers; and held out every motive to wean their love from the public, and to place it on their commander. Nor were his attentions fixed upon the military alone; they extended to his partisans in the city: he pillaged the wealth of his provinces, to diffuse it among the citizens of Rome; and thus even rapine in his hands assumed an air of munificence.

Pompey was not unapprised of this, and found, at

at last, that he had committed a fatal oversight. He longed to resume that influence which others had insidiously wrested from him; and an opportunity soon offered of obtaining his desire. As all elections had, for many years, been effected by sedition and bribery; the people became weary of a mockery of authority; and no magistrates had been elected for the space of eight months. This state of anarchy was heightened by the death of Clodius, who was killed by Milo, as he was returning to town from the country. As Clodius had been always a favourite of the people; his body was immediately brought to Rome, and exposed publicly to view. Nothing more was requisite to kindle a tumult: the multitude ran furiously to Milo's house, to set it on fire; but being defended by his partisans, they were repulsed with great slaughter.

Returning to the dead body, they drew it to the senate-house, and there making a funeral pile with the seats of the magistrates, consumed the body and that stately edifice together. After this the seditious dispersed themselves all over the city, where, under pretence of searching for Milo's friends, they committed the greatest outrages which unlicenced fury could suggest. Every street was filled with murders and quarrels; and it was dangerous even to come abroad. In this universal tumult and distration, all eyes were turned upon Pompey, to restore tranquillity, and give the sufferers redress. Many were inclined to invest him with the office of dictator; but Cato, unwilling to endanger the state, by intrusting the greatest power to the most unbounded ambition, prevailed, that, instead of

being

being created dictator, he should only be made sole consul *, In consequence of this accession of power, a body of troops were allotted Pompey; a thousand talents were granted to maintain them; the government of Spain was continued to him for four year's longer; while Milo was condemned to banishment, even though Cicero undertook to defend him. It seems, indeed, that the tribunal from whence he harangued the populace, was surrounded by the consul's soldiers, so that he was quite intimidated, and unable to exert his usual powers. Pompey, who had hitherto acted alone, then took Metellus for his colleague, whose daughter Cornelia he had lately married; a woman of great merit and beauty; and by this new alliance, he flattered himself that he was once more a match for his rival.

Cæsar, not insensible of the jealousies of Pompey, in order to bring matters to an explanation, took occasion, from the many honours which the latter had just received, to solicit for the consulship in his turn, together with a prolongation of his government in Gaul. In this transaction Pompey seemed to be quite inactive; but at the same time privately employed two of his trusty dependents to alledge in the senate, that the laws did not permit a person that was absent to offer himself as a candidate for the consulship. Pompey's view was to allure Cæsar from his government; but the latter percieving his artifice, chose to remain in his province; convinced, that

* A consul might be called to an account after the expiration of his office, for mal administration; but a dictator was subject to no such control.

while he headed such an army as was now devoted to his interest, he could at any time give laws as well as magistrates to the state, when it suited his convenience to appear.

The senate, out of their devotion to Pompey, because he had for some time attempted to defend them from the encroachments of the people, reclaimed the two legions which were in Cæsar's army, belonging to his rival, under pretence of opposing the Parthians, but, in reality, to diminish Cæar's power. Cæsar easily saw their motive. But as his plans were not yet ready for execution, he complied with the orders of the senate; having previously attached the officers to him with benefits, and the soldiers with a bounty.

The next step the senate took, was to recal Cæsar from his government, as his appointment was very near expiring. Every person perceived the danger the state was in, from the continuance of his command over an army entirely devoted to his interests, and become almost invincible by long experience. Some of the fathers had even the vain presumption to talk of bringing him to an account for the large sums of money he had extorted from the provinces of Gaul. But Cæsar was not without his friends in the senate: among the rest, Curio, lately elected a tribune of the people, having been bribed to his interests, secretly favoured his cause, Curio was a man of strong eloquence, great resolution, and of a desperate fortune: he therefore pretended highly to approve the resolutions of the senate, and asserted, that he could never think liberty secure, while such armies, in different quarters, were in readiness to

destroy it, whenever their leaders should give the word of command: but then he insinuated, that the chief security of the state depended upon the jealousy which these armies entertained of each other. It was therefore his opinion that, Cæsar should not leave his army, till Pompey had set him the example. This was a proposal, for which Pompey had by no means been prepared: his friends alledged that his time was not yet expired. But, this not satisfying the tribune; Pompey observed, that he had taken up his offices at the command of the senate; and that he was ready to resign them whenever his employers thought proper; that he knew Cæsar, with whose friendship and alliance he had long been honoured, would not hesitate to do the same, when he knew that the senate had appointed him a successor.

Curio perceived the address of Pompey, whose only aim was to have a successor actually nominated. He therefore replied, that in order to shew the sincerity of his professions, it was not enough to promise to resign his government; but at that instant to perform a thing he had it so easily in his power to do: adding, that both were too powerful: and that it was for the interest of the commonwealth they should return to their former privacy. He concluded with saying, that there was no other method left for public security, but to order both to lay down their commands; and to declare him an enemy to his country who should disobey. Curio had made this proposal, with a certainty of its being rejected by Pompey, whom he knew to be too fond of command, and too confidnet of his own superiority over Cæsar, to begin the submission.* In

fact,

fact, he judged very justly. Pompey was rendered arrogant, not only by his good fortune, and his present honours; but also by false accounts which his flatterers had reported, concerning the fancied disaffection of Cæsar's soldiers to their general. Nay, to such a pitch of self-security did he at last make pretensions; that when Cicero asked him what forces he had to repel Cæsar? Pompey replied, that if he only stamped with his foot, an army would start up from the ground to oppose him. Thus confidence at first, and afterwards shame when he found himself mistaken, operated so powerfully upon Pompey, that he postponed preparations for his defence, till they were too late to render him any effectual service.

Curio, having obtained his aims in this particular, dismissed the senate, as he was impowered to do by his office. But Marcellus, who was consul, and a partisan of Pompey, convoked it immediately after, and then put it to the vote, whether Cæsar should be continued in his government. The whole assembly were immediately of opinion, that he should be superseded. He then demanded their pleasure as to Pompey's continuance in the government he enjoyed; on which the majority declared in his favour. Curio then put a third question, whether it would not be most expedient to supersede them both? To which three hundred and sixty of the senate assented; and only twenty-two declared against it. Marcellus being thus frustrated in his views of obtaining the sanction of the senate to continue Pompey in his government, could not contain his resentment; but rising in a rage, cried out, "if you will have Cæsar for your

"master; you may." Upon which, one of his own party asserting, in order to intimidate the senate still more, that Cæsar had passed the Alps, and was marching with his whole army directly towards Rome, the consul immediately quitting the senate, repaired with his colleague to Pompey, at that time in the country; and, presenting him with a sword, commanded him to march against Cæsar, and fight in defence of the commonwealth. Pompey declared he was ready to obey; but, with an air of pretended moderation added, that it was only in case more gentle expedients should prove inefficacious.

Cæsar, who informed of all that passed by his partisans at Rome, though he was still in Gaul, was willing to give his actions the appearance of justice. He therefore wrote to the senate several times, desiring to be continued in his government of Gaul, as Pompey had been in that of Spain; or else that he should be permitted to stand for the consulship, and his absence be dispensed with. He further agreed to lay down his employment, when Pompey should do the same; but the senate who were devoted to his rival, rejected all his propositions, blindly confident of their own power, and relying on the conduct and influence of their favourite. Cæsar, still averse from coming to an open rupture with the state, at last was content to solicit the government of Illyria, with two legions; but this was also refused him. A fatal obstinacy had seized the senate, who were determined to sacrifice his power in order to increase that of Pompey; so that they attempted to repress Cæsar's injustice by still greater of their own. Finding all attempts at an accommodation fruitless, and consci-

conscious, if not of the goodness of his cause, at least of the devotion of his troops, Cæsar began to draw them towards the confines of Italy, and, passing the Alps with his third legion, stopped at Ravenna, a city of Cisalpine Gaul, from whence he once more wrote a letter to the consuls, declaring that he was ready to resign all command, if Pompey would shew equal submission. But he now added, that if all power was to be given to one only, he would endeavour to prevent so unjust a distribution; and declared, that if they persisted, he would shortly arrive in Rome, to punish their partiality and the wrongs of his country. These menaces exasperated the whole body of the senate against him. Marcellus, the consul, gave way to his rage; while Lentulus, his colleague, being already of a ruined fortune, and therefore indifferent about events, openly declared, that after such an insult, further deliberation was needless, and that arms was the only resort. It was then, after some opposition, decreed, that Cæsar should resign his government, and disband his forces within a limited time; or, if he refused obedience, that he should be declared an enemy to the commonwealth. They next invested the consuls with absolute authority; and appointed Domitius, a man of great courage and abilities, to be Cæsar's successor in the government of Gaul. Pompey was ordered to put himself at the head of what troops were in readiness; and all those who were not attached to the interests of Cæsar, prepared to take up arms at Rome.

The partisans of Cæsar now began to be apprehensive of personal danger; in particular Curio, with the two tribunes Marcus Antonius

and Longinus. These accordingly fled, disguised as slaves, to Cæsar's camp deploring the injustice and tyranny of the senate, and pleading their merits in his cause. Cæsar produced them to his army, in the habits which they had thus assumed, and, seemingly touched with commiseration for their sufferings, burst out into severe invectives against the senate, alleging their tyranny over the state, their cruelty to his friends, and their flagrant ingratitude to himself for all his past services. "These," cried he, pointing to the tribunes, who were in slaves' habits, "these are the rewards obtained by the faithful "servants of their country; men, whose persons "are sacred by their office, and whose cha-"racters have been esteemed for their virtues; "these are driven from their country, obliged "for safety to appear as the meanest of man-"kind, to find protection only in a distant pro-"vince of the empire; for maintaining the rights "of freedom, those rights which even Sylla, in "all the rage of slaughter, dared not violate." This speech he inforced with the most passionate gestures, accompanied with tears. The soldiers, as if inspired with one mind, cried out that they were prepared to follow him wherever he should lead, and were ready to die or revenge his injuries. An universal acclamation rung through the whole camp: every man prepared for a new service of danger; and, forgetting the toils of ten former campaigns, retired to his tent to meditate on future conquest.

A. C. 49. U. C. 699.

The army being thus brought to the temper that was wished, Cæsar sat down to supper, cheerfully conversing with his friends on subjects of

of literature and philosophy, and apparently disengaged from every ambitious concern. After some time, rising up, he desired the company to make themselves merry in his absence, and said that he would be with them in a short time. Having previously made the necessary preparations, he immediately set out, attended by a few friends, for Ariminum, a city upon the confines of Italy, whither he had dispatched a part of his army the morning before. This journey by night, which was very fatiguing, he performed sometimes walking, and sometimes on horseback, till at the break of day he came up with his army, which consisted of about five thousand men, near the Rubicon, a little river which separates Italy from Gaul, and which terminated the limits of his command, [illegible].

The Romans had been taught to consider this river as the sacred boundary of their domestic empire; the senate had long before made an edict, which is still to be seen engraven on a pillar near Rimini, by which they solemnly devoted to the infernal gods, and branded with sacrilege and parricide, any person who should presume to pass the Rubicon with an army, a legion, or even a single cohort. Cæsar, therefore, having advanced at the head of his army to the side of the river, stopped upon the banks, as if impressed with awe at the greatness of his enterprise. The dangers he was to encounter, the slaughters that might ensue, the calamities of his native city, all rushed upon his imagination in gloomy perspective, and struck him with remorse. He pondered for some time in fixed melancholy, as he eyed the stream, debating with himself whether he should venture; "If I

"pass

" pass this river," said he to one of his generals who stood by, " what miseries skall I bring upon " my country! and, if I stop, I am undone." Thus saying, and resuming all his former intrepidity, he plunged in, crying out, that the die was cast, and all was now over. His soldiers followed him with equal promptitude, and quickly arriving at Ariminum, made themselves masters of the place, without resistance.

The news of this unexpected enterprise, excited the utmost terrors in Rome. At the same instant were to be seen the citizens flying into the country for safety, and the inhabitants of the country flocking for shelter into the city. In this universal confusion, Pompey felt all the remorse which must necessarily arise from the remembrance of having advanced his rival to his present pitch of power: wherever he appeared, many of his former friends were ready to accuse him of supinenes, and sarcastically to reproach his ill-grounded presumption. Cato reminded him of the many warnings he had given, and to which he had not attended. Wearied with these reproaches, though offered under colour of advice, he did all that lay in his power to encourage and confirm his followers: he told them that they should not want an army, for that he would be their leader: he confessed, indeed, that he had been deceived in Cæsar's aims, judging of them only by the purity of his own; however, if his friends were still inspired with the love of freedom, they might yet enjoy it. He consoled them by holding out the most flattering prospects, that his two lieutenants were at the head of a considerable army in Spain, composed of veteran troops, which had made the conquest

conquest of the east; and, beside these, there were infinite resources both in Asia and Africa, together with the succours they might reasonably receive from all the kingdoms in alliance with Rome. This representation served, in some measure, to revive the hopes of the confederacy. The greatest part of the senate, his private friends and dependents, together with all those who espoused his cause, agreed to follow him: for, being in no capacity to resist Cæsar at Rome, he resolved to lead his forces to Capua, and join his two legions which were stationed there. No words can paint the misery of the scene on his quitting Rome. Ancient senators, respectable magistrates, and many of the flower of the young nobility, obliged thus to leave their native city defenceless to the invader, raised an universal concern in all ranks of people, who followed them part of the way with lamentations, tears, and vows for their success.

Cæsar, after vainly attempting to bring Pompey to an accommodation, resolved to pursue him into Capua, before he could have time to collect his forces. However, at the very outset, he was in some measure discouraged by the defection of Labienus, the associate of all his former victories; who, either disgusted at his command, or unwilling to desolate his native country, went over to the other side. But Cæsar, who was not to be intimidated by a partial loss, marched on to take possession of the cities that lay between him and his rival, not regarding Rome, which he knew would fall of course to the conqueror.

Corsinium was the first city that attempted to stop the rapidity of his progress. It was defended

fended by Domitius, who had been appointed by the senate to succeed him in Gaul, and was garrisoned by twenty cohorts. Cæsar, however, quickly invested it; and Domitius, being disappointed in his hopes of relief, was at last obliged to endeavour to escape privately. His intentions happening to be divulged, the garrison resolved to consult their own safety, by delivering him up to the besiegers. Cæsar readily accepted their offers, but restrained his men from immediately entering into the town. After some time, Lentulus, the consul, who was one of the besieged, came out, to implore forgiveness for himself and the rest of his confederates, reminding Cæsar of their ancient friendship. Cæsar would not wait the conclusion of his speech, but generously replied, that he came into Italy not to injure the liberties of Rome and its citizens, but to restore them. This humane reply being quickly carried into the city, the senators and the knights with their children and some officers of the garrison came out to claim the conqueror's protection, who, mildly glancing at their ingratitude, gave them their liberty, with permission to go wheresoever they pleased. But while he dismissed the leaders, he, upon this, as upon all other occasions, took care to attach the common soldiers to his interest; sensible that he might stand in need of an army; but that, while he lived, his army could never stand in need of a commander.

Pompey having intelligence of what passed upon this occasion, immediately retreated to Brundusium, where he resolved to stand a siege, in order to delay the enemy till the forces of the empire could be collected. Cæsar, as was expected,

pected, soon arrived before the place; and having accidentally taken one of Pompey's engineers a prisoner, gave him liberty, with orders to persuade his general, that it might be for the interests of both, as well as the advantage of the empire, to have an interview; but to this overture he received no answer. He next attempted to block up the harbour; but in this being frustrated by the diligence of Pompey, he sent another proposal for an interview; to which it was answered, that no propositions of that kind could be received in the absence of the consuls. Thus, seeing no hopes of reconciling their differences by negociation, he turned all his thoughts to carry on the war, which Pompey, on his side, resolved to prosecute with equal vigour.

His first aim in keeping Cæsar some time employed before Brundusium succeeded to his wish; at length, he prepared, with all imaginable caution, to abandon the town, and transport his garrison to Dyrracchium, where the new-made consul was levying men for the service of the empire. In pursuance of his design, he fortified the harbour in such a manner that the enemy could not easily molest him; and then embarked his troops with the utmost silence and dispatch; leaving only a few archers and slingers on the walls. Cæsar being apprised of the retreat of Pompey, immediately attempted to prevent the embarkation, and was actually going to lead his men over a pitfall, which his rival had secretly placed in his way, had he not been interrupted by the townsmen, who informed him of his danger.

Cæsar, finding he could not pursue Pompey for want of shipping, resolved to go back to Rome,

Rome, and take possession of the public treasures, which his opponent, by unaccountable over-sight, had neglected taking with him. Cæsar was received at Rome with the repeated acclamations of the lower class of the citizens, and by all of his own party. Those of the senate also, who were attached to his interests, assembled to congratulate him on his arrival, to whom he made a plausible speech, justifying his conduct, and professing his aversion for the violent measures he had been compelled to adopt. Then, under a pretence that his cause was that of justice and of the commonwealth, he prepared to possess himself of those treasures which had been laid up for the use of the public. But upon his coming to the door of the treasury, Metellus, the tribune, who guarded it, refused to let him pass, alleging that the money was sacred, and that horrible imprecations had been denounced against such as touched it upon any occasion but that of a Gallic war. Cæsar, however, was not of a disposition to be intimidated by superstition, and observed, that there was no occasion for money to carry on a Gallic war, as he had entirely subdued all Gaul. The tribune persisted, and started new difficulties, till Cæsar, with more than usual emotion, laying his hand upon his sword, threatened to strike him dead; "And know, young man," cried he, "that it "is easier to do this than to say it." This menace had its effect; Metellus retired, and Cæsar pillaged the treasury to the amount of three thousand pounds weight of gold, besides an immense quantity of silver. Having thus provided for continuing the war, he departed from Rome, with a design of subduing Pompey's lieutenants

lieutenants Afranius and Petreius, who had been long in Spain at the head of a veteran army. This was composed of the best legions of the empire, and had been constantly victorious under all its commanders. Cæsar, however, who knew the abilities of its present generals, jocosely said, as he was preparing to go thither, that he went to fight an army without a general, and, upon conquering it, should return to fight a general without an army. Having refreshed his men, previously to their setting out, he led them once more a long and fatiguing march across the Alps, through the extensive provinces of Gaul, to meet the enemy in Spain. This they performed with invincible resolution, animated by the example of a general who was dear to them, and whose glory they identified with their own.

The first conflict which he had with Afranius and Petreius was rather unfavourable. They fought near the city of Ilerda, and both sides claimed the honour of the victory. Nevertheless, it appeared soon after that Cæsar was reduced to great straits for want of provisions, which the overflowing of the river and the position of the enemy entirely cut off. However, nothing was able to subdue his diligence and activity; for, causing slight boats covered with leather to be made, and in another quarter diverting the attention of the enemy, he carried his vessels in waggons twenty miles distance from the camp, launched them upon the broadest part of the river, and with great dexterity passed his legions over. Having thus gained new supplies of provisions and men, he made a feint as if he intended to distress the enemy in turn, by cutting

off their supplies; and for this purpose he began to throw up intrenchments and cut ditches, as if to divert the course of the river into a different channel. These preparations so intimidated the enemy, that they resolved to decamp by night. But Cæsar, who had intimation of their design by his spies, pursued them with a small part of his army, and forcing them to ford the river, before they had time to rally on the other side, appeared with the main body of his forces to receive them. Thus hemmed in on both sides, and reduced to the utmost extremity of hunger and thirst, they were obliged to yield at discretion. But clemency was the brightest virtue of Cæsar; he dismissed them all with the kindest professions, and sent them home to Rome, loaded at once with shame and obligations, to publish his virtues, and confirm the affections of his adherents. Thus, in the space of about forty days, he became master of all Spain; and then departing for Marseilles, obliged that city to surrender at discretion. He pardoned the inhabitants, for refusing to admit him as he passed, chiefly upon account of their name and antiquity; and leaving two legions there, in garrison. returned again victorious to Rome. The citizens upon this occasion received him with fresh demonstrations of joy, and created him dictator and consul: but the first of these offices he laid down after he had held it but eleven days; probably with a view of shewing with what promptitude he could relinquish power.

Meanwhile, Pompey was actively employed in making preparations in Epirus and Greece. All the monarchs of the East had declared in his favour, and sent large supplies. He was master

master of nine effective Italian legions, and had a fleet of five hundred large ships, under the conduct of Bibulus, an experienced commander. He was also supplied with large sums of money, and all the necessaries for an army, from the tributary provinces round him. Already he had attacked Antony and Dolabella, who commanded for Cæsar in that part of the empire; with such success, that the former was obliged to flee, and the latter was taken prisoner. Crowds of the most distinguished citizens and nobles from Rome arrived every day to join him. He had at one time above two hundred senators in his camp, among whom were Cicero and Cato, whose approbation of his cause was equivalent to an army. All these advantages, both of strength and council, drew the wishes of mankind to his cause, and raised an opposition that threatened Cæsar with speedy destruction, notwithstanding the progress he had made.

Having, however, made the requisite preparations, Cæsar, with a courage that to ordinary capacities might seem to be rashness, resolved to face his rival in the East, and led his forces to Brundusium, a sea-port town of Italy, in order to transport them into Greece: but he wanted a fleet numerous enough to carry the whole at once, and therefore having safely landed one half at a place called Pharsalus, he sent back his navy to bring over the rest of his forces. In this second expedition thirty of his ships, on their return, fell into the hands of Pompey's admiral, who set them all on fire, even destroying the mariners, in order to intimidate the rest by this cruel example, which reflects disgrace on the cause he espoused.

Pompey was raising supplies in Macedonia, when informed of Cæsar's landing upon the coasts of Epirus; he therefore resolved immediately to march to Dyracchium, in order to cover that place from the enemy's attempts, as all his ammunition and provisions were deposited there. Upon his arrival at that city he began to perceive that many of his new-raised troops were neither prompt in their obedience, nor faithful to their standards. In consequence of this, he obliged them to take an oath, that they would never abandon their general, but follow him through all his fortunes. Thus, supposing himself secure in their attachment, he resolved to exhaust his rival by protracting the war, as his resources were infinitely the most numerous in this quarter of the globe.

The rival armies first came in sight of each other, on the opposite banks of the river Apsus; and as both were commanded by the two greatest generals then in existence, a battle was eagerly desired by the soldiers on both sides. But neither was willing to hazard it upon this occasion: Pompey could not rely upon his new levies; and Cæsar would not venture an engagement till he was joined by the rest of his forces. Accordingly, the armies remained in this disposition for some days; looking upon each other with all the anxiety of suspense, but with equal confidence of success whenever they should be brought to action.

Cæsar had waited for some time with extreme impatience for the arrival of a reinforcement, and he had written and sent several times to his generals to use dispatch. At last, despairing of their punctuality, and anxious to know the real situation of affairs, he resolved upon an attempt, which

which nothing but the extraordinary confidence he had in his good fortune could excuse. He disguised himself in the habit of a slave, and, with all imaginary secrecy, went on board a fisherman's bark at the mouth of the river Apsus, with a design to pass over to Brundusium, where the rest of his forces lay, and to conduct them over in person. Accordingly he rowed off in the beginning of the night, and was a considerable way advanced, when the wind suddenly changed against him, the sea began to rise in billows of formidable height, and the storm increased to an alarming degree. The fisherman who had rowed all night with extreme labour, was often for putting back, but was dissuaded by his passenger. At length, however, when far advanced on the intended voyage, he found himself unable to proceed, and yet too distant from land to hope for making good his return. In this moment of despondence he was going to give up the oar, and commit himself to the mercy of the waves, when Cæsar discovering himself, commanded him to row boldly; "Fear nothing," cried he, "you "carry Cæsar and his fortune." Encouraged by the presence of so great a man, the fisherman made fresh endeavours, to accomplish his voyage. But the storm becoming still more violent and the wind unfavourable, he was obliged to desist, and make for land, which was not effected without great difficulty. As soon as he rejoined his soldiers, who had, for some time, missed their general, and knew not what was become of him; they flocked joyfully round him, congratulating his escape, and kindly upbraiding his attempt in so far distrusting their

courage and affections, as to seek out new forces, when, without any aid, they were sure to conquer his enemies. His excuses were not less tender than their remonstrances: but the joy of both was soon after heightened, by an information of the landing of the troops he had long expected at Apollonia, from whence they were approaching, under the conduct of Antony and Calenus, to join him. He decamped in order to meet them, and prevent, if possible, Pompey with his army from engaging them on their march, as he lay on that side of the river where the succours had been obliged to come on shore. This diligence was not less successful than requisite; for Pompey had actually made some movements to anticipate their junction, and had laid an ambuscade for Antony; but failing in this, he was obliged to retreat, under an apprehension of being hemmed in between the two armies; which effected their junction the same day.

Pompey, now, led his forces to Asparagus, near Dyracchium, in order to be sure of supplies; and pitched his camp upon a tongue of land that jutted into the sea, where also was a small but safe bay for ships. In this place, being most advantageously situated, he immediately began to entrench his camp; which Cæsar perceiving, and finding that he was not likely soon to quit so advantageous a post, began to draw circumvallations behind him, causing magazines of corn to be made in all parts, not already wasted by the enemy's forces. Yet, notwithstanding all his care, provisions began to be very scarce in Cæsar's army: his men were obliged to make use of beans and barley, and a root called

called chara, which they mingled with milk; but, accustomed to hardships, they bore all with exemplary patience. Cæsar, however, was so fertile in resources, that he could not submit to inconveniences which might be obviated. All beyond Pompey's camp, towards the land side, was hilly and steep; wherefore Cæsar built redoubts upon the hills, stretching round from shore to shore; and then caused lines of communication to be drawn from hill to hill, by which he blocked up his rival's camp. He hoped, by this blockade, to force his opponent to a battle, which he ardently desired, and which the other as studiously declined. Thus both sides continued for some time employed in designs and stratagems, the one to annoy, and the other to defend. Cæsar's men daily carried on their works to straiten the enemy: those of Pompey did the same to enlarge themselves; and though they declined coming to a battle, yet they severely galled the enemy by their slingers and archers. Cæsar, however, was indefatigable; he caused coverings to be made of the skins of beasts to protect his men while at work; he cut off all the water that supplied the enemy's camp, and intercepted the forage for their horses; so that it was impossible to retain their position much longer.

Thus straitened, Pompey at last resolved to break through his lines. Accordingly, having informed himself of the condition of Cæsar's fortifications, he ordered his light infantry and archers on board his ships, with directions to attack Cæsar's entrenchments by sea, where they were most vulnerable. This was done with such effect, that all the centurions of Cæsar's first cohort were cut off, except one; and though all

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used their utmost endeavours to frustrate Pompey's designs, yet, by reiterated attempts, he at last effected his purpose of extricating his army from its present restraint, and of encamping in another place, by the sea, where he had the convenience both of forage and shipping. Cæsar being thus foiled in his views of blocking up the enemy, resolved at last to force Pompey to a battle, though upon disadvantageous terms. The engagement began by attempting to cut off a legion which was posted in a wood, and this brought on a general battle. The conflict was for some time carried on with great ardour, and with equal fortune; but Cæsar's army being entangled in some old entrenchments, began to fall into disorder; and at last fled with precipitation, while great numbers perished. Pompey pursued his success to the very camp of Cæsar; and now was the crisis of Cæsar's fate; but his usual good fortune prevailed: Pompey, either surprised with the suddenness of his victory, or fearful of an ambuscade, withdrew his troops into his own camp, and thus, by his timid caution, lost the empire of the world. However, his generals and attendants vainly considered the present success as a decisive determination of the war; and, adding cruelty to their confidence, put all their prisoners to the sword.

The resolution of Cæsar, however, did not forsake him, nor his hopes fail; he found that hitherto his attempts to force Pompey to engage him upon equal terms, were ineffectual; he therefore resolved to appear as if willing to protract the war in his turn. Wherefore, calling the army together, he thus addressed them with his [illegible] composure and intrepidity: "We have no "reason,

"reason, my fellow-soldiers, to be dejected at "our late miscarriage. The loss of one battle, "after so many victories, should rather awaken "our caution than depress our resolution. Let "us remember the long course of victories "which have been gained by us in Gaul, Britain, Italy, and Spain; and then let us consider how many greater dangers we have escaped; which have only served to increase "the pleasure of succeeding victory. If, after "all these exploits and successes, one little disaster, one error of inadvertency, or indeed of "destiny itself, has deprived us of our just reward; yet we have still sufficient force to ensure it for the future; and, though we should "be deprived of every resource, yet the brave "have one still left to overcome every danger: "namely, to despise it."---After thus encouraging his legions, and degrading some of his subaltern officers, who were remiss in their duty, he prepared to decamp, and to make his retreat to Apollonia, where he intended to refresh and recruit his army. Having, therefore, sent his baggage before, he followed at the head of his soldiers; and, though pursued by Pompey, yet having the advantage in time, he effected his intention.

In the mean time, Domitius, one of his lieutenants, stationed in Macedonia, with three legions, was in danger of being cut off by the superior forces of the enemy. Cæsar resolved to join him with all expedition; and, after refreshing his army, set forward with the utmost dispatch. Pompey was nearly in similar circumstances of apprehension; for Scipio, one of his lieutenants, was in Thessaly, at the head

head of the Syrian legion; and he was fearful, lest Cæsar's march might be intended to surprise this body of troops before their junction. Thus each general marched with all the diligence possible, to secure his friends, and defeat the designs of his enemies. Cæsar's expedition was most successful; he was joined by Domitius upon the frontiers of Thessaly: and thus, with all his forces united, he marched directly to Gomphi: but the news of his defeat at Dyrracchium having reached this place before him, the inhabitants shut the gates against him. In consequence of this repulse, he ordered the machines for scaling to be got ready; and, causing an assault to be made, proceeded with such vigour, that, notwithstanding the great height of the walls, the town was taken in a few hours. Cæsar left it to be plundered, and without delaying his march, went forward to Metropolis, another town of the same province, which yielded at his approach. By these means, he soon became possessed of all Thessaly, except Larissa, which was garrisoned by Scipio, one of his rival's commanders.

Pompey's officers, being much elated with their late victory, were continually soliciting their general to bring them to a battle. Every delay became insupportable; they presumed to tax the purity of their leader's motives for procrastination. Confident of victory, they divided all the places in the government among each other; and portioned out the lands of those whom, in imagination, they had already vanquished. Nor did revenge less employ their thoughts, than ambition and avarice. The proscription was actually drawn up, not for the condemnation of individuals, but of whole ranks of

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the enemy: it was was even proposed, that all the senators in Pompey's army should be appointed, judges over such as had either actually opposed, or, by their neutrality, had failed to assist their party. Pompey, thus assailed by men of weak heads and eager expectations, and incessantly teased with importunities to engage, found himself too irresolute to oppose their solicitations; and therefore renouncing his own judgment, in compliance with those about him, he gave up all schemes of prudence for those dictated by avarice and passion. Advancing into Thessaly, he encamped upon the plains of Pharsalia, where he was joined by Scipio, his lieutenant, with the troops under his command. There he awaited the coming up of his rival, resolved upon deciding the fate of the empire without further delay.

Cæsar had for some time been sounding the inclinations of his legions, and providing for their safety in case of miscarriage; but, at length, finding them resolute and unanimous, he led them towards the plains of Pharsalia, where Pompey was encamped. The approach of these two great armies, composed of the best and bravest troops in the world, together with the greatness of the prize for which they contended, filled all minds with anxiety, though with different expectations. Pompey's army turned all their thoughts to the enjoyment of the victory; Cæsar's, with sounder judgment, considered only the means of obtaining it: Pompey's army depended upon their numbers, and their different generals; Cæsar's, upon their own discipline, and the conduct of their single commander; Pompey's partizans hoped much from the justice of their cause; Cæsar's alleged the frequent and

unavailing

unavailing proposals which they had made for peace *.

Thus the views, hopes, and motives of both seemed different, but their animosity and ambition were the same. Cæsar, who was generally foremost in offering battle, led out his army in array to meet the enemy; but Pompey, either suspecting his troops, or dreading the event, still kept his advantageous situation. Cæsar, being unwilling to make an attack at a disadvantage, resolved to decamp the next day, in expectation that, as the enemy would not fail to follow him, he might find some happier opportunity of coming to an engagement. Accordingly, the order for marching was given, and the tents struck,

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when intelligence was brought him that Pompey's army had quitted their entrenchments, and had advanced farther into the plain than usual. This was the juncture that Cæsar had long wished for, and tried to hasten. Causing his troops, that were upon their march, to halt, with a countenance of joy he informed them, that the happy time had at last come, which was to crown their glory, and terminate their fatigues. He then drew up his troops in order, and advanced towards the place of battle. His forces, however, were much inferior to those of Pompey, whose army amounted to above forty-five thousand foot, and seven thousand horse; while Cæsar's did not exceed twenty-two thousand foot, and about a thousand horse. This disproportion,

* From the history of this formidable war, as narrated by the ancients, it appears that Cæsar made repeated overtures for accommodation, which Pompey, by a blind fatality, as constantly spurned.

particularly

particularly in cavalry, had filled the latter with some degree of apprehension; wherefore, he had some time before picked out the strongest and nimblest of his foot soldiers, and accustomed them to fight between the ranks of his cavalry, in order to supply the deficiency of their numbers.

Pompey, on the other hand, was too confident of success; he even boasted in council, that he could put Cæsar's legion to flight, without striking a single blow, presuming that, as soon as the armies formed, his cavalry, on which he placed his chief reliance, would out-flank and surround the enemy. Labienus commended this scheme of Pompey; and to increase the confidence of the army still more, he took an oath, in which the rest followed him, never to return to the camp but with victory. In this disposition, and under these advantageous impressions, the troops were led to battle.

Pompey drew up his army with skill and judgment: in the centre, and on the flanks, he placed all his veterans, and distributed his new-raised troops between the wings and the main body. The Syrian legions were placed in the centre, under the command of Scipio; the Spaniards, on whom he greatly relied, were on the right, under Domitius Ænobarbus; and on the left were stationed the two legions, which Cæsar had restored in the beginning of the war, led on by Pompey himself; because from thence he intended to make the principal attack; and for the same reason he had assembled there all his horse, slingers, and archers, of whom his right wing, being covered by the river Enipeus, stood in no need. Cæsar likewise divided his army into three bodies, under three commanders: Domi-

tius Calvinus being placed in the centre, and Mark Antony on the left, while he himself led on the right wing, which was to oppose the left, commanded by Pompey. As he observed the enemy's numerous cavalry to be all drawn to one spot, he guessed at Pompey's intention; to obviate which he made a draft of six cohorts from his rear line, and forming them into a separate body, concealed them behind his right wing, with instructions not to throw their javelins at a distance, but to keep them in their hands, and push them directly into the faces and eyes of the horsemen, who, being composed of the younger part of the Roman nobility, valued themselves upon their beauty, and dreaded a scar in the face more than a wound in the body. He, lastly, placed his small body of cavalry so as to cover the right of his favourite tenth legion, ordering his right line not to march till they had received the signal from him. And now, the fate of the empire of Rome was to be decided by the greatest generals, the bravest officers, and the most expert troops, that the world had ever seen. Almost every private man in both armies was capable of performing the duty of a commander, and each seemed inspired with a resolution to conquer or die.

As the armies approached, the two generals went from rank to rank, encouraging their men, raising their hopes, and obviating their doubts. Pompey represented to his men, that the glorious occasion which they had earnestly solicited him to grant, was now before them; "and, indeed," cried he, "what advantage could you "wish over an enemy that you are not now pos-"sessed of? Your numbers, your vigour, a late "victory,

"victory, all assure a speedy and an easy conquest "of those harassed and broken troops, composed of men worn out with age, and imprest "with the terrors of a recent defeat. But there "is still a stronger bulwark for our protection "than the superiority of our strength---the justice of our cause. You are engaged in the "defence of liberty and of your country: you "are supported by its laws, and followed by its "magistrates; you have the world spectators of "your conduct, and wishing you success: on the "contrary, he whom you oppose is a robber and "a traitor to his country, and almost already "sunk with the consciousness of his crimes, as "well as the bad success of his arms. Shew, "then, on this occasion, all that ardour and detestation of tyranny that should animate Romans, and do justice to mankind."

Cæsar, for his part, exhibited to his men that steady serenity for which he was so much admired in the midst of danger. He insisted on nothing so strongly to his soldiers, as his frequent and unsuccessful endeavours for peace. He talked with horror of the blood he was going to shed, and pleaded only the necessity that urged him to the deed. He deplored the many brave men that were to fall on both sides, and the wounds of his country, whoever should be victorious. His soldiers answered his speech with looks of ardour and impatience, on observing which he gave the signal to charge. The word on Pompey's side was, "Hercules the invincible:" that on Cæsar's, "Venus the victorious." Pompey ordered his men to receive the first shock without moving out of their places, expecting the enemy's ranks to be put into disorder by their

motion.

motion. Cæsar's soldiers were now rushing on with their usual impetuosity, when perceiving the enemy motionless, they stopped short, as if by general consent, and halted in the midst of their career. A terrible pause ensued, in which both armies continued to gaze upon each other with mutual terror and dreadful serenity: at length, Cæsar's men having taken breath, ran furiously upon the enemy, first discharging their javelins, and then drawing their swords. The same method was observed by Pompey's troops, who as firmly sustained the attack. His cavalry also were ordered to charge at the very onset, which, with the multitude of archers and slingers, soon obliged Cæsar's men to give ground, and throw themselves, as he had foreseen, upon the flank of his army: whereupon Cæsar immediately ordered the six cohorts, that were placed as a reinforcement, to advance; and repeated his orders to strike at the enemies' faces. This had the desired effect; the cavalry, who thought they were sure of victory, received an immediate check: the unusual method of fighting pursued by the cohorts, their aiming entirely at the visages of the assailants, contributed to intimidate the enemy so much, that instead of defending their persons, their only endeavour was to save their faces. A total rout ensued of their whole body, which fled in great disorder to the neighbouring mountains, while the archers and slingers, thus abandoned, were cut to pieces. Cæsar now commanded the cohorts to pursue their success, and advancing, charged Pompey's troops upon the flank: this charge the enemy withstood for some time with great bravery, till he brought up his third line, which had

had not yet engaged. Pompey's infantry being thus doubly attacked in front by fresh troops, and in the rear by the victorious cohorts, could no longer resist, but fled to their camp. The flight began among the auxiliaries, though Pompey's right wing still valiantly maintained their ground. Cæsar, however, being now certain of victory, with his usual clemency, cried out to pursue the strangers, but to spare the Romans; upon which they all laid down their arms and received quarter.

The battle had now lasted from the break of day till noon, the weather being extremely hot. Nevertheless, the conquerors did not remit their ardour, being encouraged by the example of their general, who thought his victory not complete till he was master of his opponent's camp. Accordingly, marching on foot at the head of his troops, he called upon them to follow, and strike the decisive blow. The cohorts, which were left to defend the camp for some time made a formidable resistance; particularly a great number of Thracians and other barbarous nations, who were appointed for its defence; but nothing could resist the ardour of Cæsar's victorious army; the camp and trenches were at last evacuated, and the survivors escaped to the mountains.

Cæsar, seeing the field and camp strewed with his fallen countrymen, was deeply affected at so melancholy a spectacle, and exclaimed, as if by way of justification, "They would have it so." Upon entering the enemy's camp, every object presented fresh instances of the blind presumption and madness of his adversaries: on all sides were to be seen tents adorned with ivy and

branches of myrtle, couches covered with purple, and side-boards loaded with plate. Every thing, in short, evinced the most refined luxury, and seemed rather preparatives for a banquet, or the rejoicing for a victory, than the dispositions for a battle. Such a rich assemblage of plunder might have been able to engage the attention of any troops but Cæsar's; he, however, would not permit them to pursue any other object than their enemies, till they were entirely subdued. A considerable body of Pompey's army having rallied on the adjacent mountains, Cæsar began to enclose them by a circumvallation. But, they quickly abandoned a post which was not tenable for want of water, and endeavoured to reach the city of Larissa. Cæsar, however, leading a part of his army by a shorter way, intercepted their retreat, and obliged these unhappy fugitives once more to seek protection from a mountain, washed by a rivulet which supplied them with water. The victor's troops were almost spent, and ready to faint with their incessant toil since morning; yet he prevailed upon them to renew their labours, and to cut off the rivulet that supplied the fugitives; who, thus deprived of all hopes of succour or subsistence, sent deputies with an offer of surrendering at discretion. During this interval of negotiation, a few senators, who were among them, took the advantage of the night to escape, and the rest next morning gave up their arms, and experienced the conqueror's clemency. Thus Cæsar by his conduct gained the most complete victory in the annals of history, and by his great clemency after the battle, in some measure seems to have deserved it. His loss amounted only to

two

two hundred men; that of Pompey to fifteen thousand, as well Romans as auxiliaries: twenty-four thousand men surrendered themselves prisoners of war, the greatest part of which entered into Cæsar's army. As to the senators and Roman knights who fell into his hands, he generously gave them liberty to retire wherever they pleased; and the letters which Pompey had received from several persons who wished to be thought neutral, he committed to the flames without reading them, as Pompey had done upon a former occasion. Thus having performed all the duties of a general and a statesman, he sent for the legions which had passed the night in the camp, in order to relieve those which had accompanied him in the pursuit; and being determined to follow Pompey, began his march, and arrived the same day at Larissa.

The courage and conduct for which Pompey had been so long and justly celebrated, seem wholly to have forsaken him at this trying crisis. When he saw his cavalry routed, on which he had placed his principal dependance, he appeared bereft of reason. Instead of thinking how to remedy this disorder, by rallying his flying troops, or by opposing fresh men to stop the progress of the conquerors, he returned to the camp, and in his tent waited the issue of an event, which it was his duty to direct, not to follow. There he remained for some moments without speaking, till being told, that the camp was attacked, "What," says he, "are we pur-"sued to our very entrenchments?" and imme-"diately quitting his armour for a habit more suited to his circumstances, he fled on horseback to Larissa; perceiving he was not pursued, he

slackened his pace, giving way to all the agonizing reflections which the melancholy reverse of his fortune must naturally suggest. In this forlorn condition he passed along the vale of Tempe, and pursuing the course of the river Peneus, at last arrived at a fisherman's hut, in which he passed the night. From thence he went on board a little bark, and keeping along the sea-shore, he descried a ship of some burthen preparing to sail, in which he embarked, and landed at Amphipolis; where, finding his affairs desperate, he steered to Lesbos, to take in his wife Cornelia, whom he had left there, at a distance from the theatre of the war. She, who had long flattered herself with the hopes of victory, felt the reverse of her fortune in an agony of distress.---Being desired by the messenger, whose tears, more than words, proclaimed the greatness of her misfortunes, to hasten, if she expected to see Pompey, with but one ship, and even that not his own; her grief, which before was violent, became insupportable: she fainted away, and lay a considerable time without any signs of life. At length, recovering herself, and reflecting it was now no time for vain lamentations, she ran quite through the city to the sea-side. Pompey received her without speaking a word, and for some time supported her in his arms in silent anguish. When they found words for their distress, Cornelia imputed to herself a part of the miseries that had come upon them, and instanced many former misfortunes of her life. Pompey endeavoured to comfort her, by representing the uncertainty of human affairs, and from his present unexpected wretchedness, teaching her to hope for as unexpected a turn of

good

good fortune. In the mean time the people of the island, who had great obligations to Pompey, gathered round them, joined in their grief, and invited them into their city. Pompey however declined their invitation, and even advised them to submit to the conqueror. "Be "under no apprehensions," cried he, "Cæsar "may be my enemy, but still let me acknow"ledge his moderation and humanity." Cratippus, the Greek philosopher, also came to pay his respects. Pompey, as is but too frequent with the unfortunate, complained to him of Providence. Cratippus wisely declined entering deeply into the argument, rather satisfied with supplying new motives to hope, than combating the present impiety of his despair.

Having taken in Corelia, he continued his course, steering to the south-east; and after touching at a few ports in his way, came before Rhodes, where he met with an inhospitable reception: thence he proceeded to Atilia, where he was joined by some soldiers and ships of war. However these were nothing against the power of his rival, from the activity of whose pursuit he was in continual apprehensions. His only hopes, therefore, lay in the assistance of the kings who were in his alliance, and from these alone he could expect security and protection. He was himself inclined to claim the assistance of the Parthians; others proposed Juba, king of Numidia; but he was at last prevailed upon to apply to Ptolemy, king of Egypt, to whose father Pompey had been a considerable benefactor. Accordingly, leaving Cilicia, he steered for the kingdom of Egypt, and when in view of the coast of that country, he sent to implore protection and safety. Ptolemy was a minor,

a minor, and both he and his kingdom were under the direction of Photinius, an eunuch, and Theodotus, a master of rhetoric. Before these wretches, Pompey's request was argued;---before such mean and mercenary persons was to be determined the fate of him, who, but a few days before, had given law to kingdoms. The opinions of the council were divided: gratitude and pity inclined some to receive him; whilst others, more obdurate or more timorous, were for denying hi n entrance into the kingdom. At length Theodotus, with a cruel policy, maintained, that both proposals were equally dangerous; that to admit him was making Pompey their master, and drawing on them Cæsar's resentment; and by not receiving him, they offended the one, without obliging the other: that, therefore, the only expedient left, was to permit him to land, and then to kill him; this would at once oblige Cæsar, and rid them of all apprehensions from Pompey's resentments: "for," concluded he, with a vulgar and malicious joke, "dead dogs can "never bite."

This advice prevailing! Achillas, commander of the forces, and Septimius, by birth a Roman, who had formerly been a centurion in Pompey's army, were appointed to carry it into execution. Attended by three or four more, they went into a little bark, and rowed towards Pompey's ship, which lay about a mile from the shore. When Pompey and his friends saw the boat moving from the shore, they began to wonder at the meanness of the preparations to receive him; and some even ventured to suspect the intentions of the Egyptian court. But before any thing could be determined,

Achillas

Achillas had reached the ship's side, and in the Greek language welcomed him to Egypt. He then invited him into the boat; alleging, that the shallows prevented larger vessels from coming to receive him. Pompey, having taken an affectionate leave of Cornelia, repeating two verses of Sophocles, which import, "that he who "trusts his freedom to a tyrant, from that moment becomes a slave," gave his hand to Achillas, and stept into the bark, with only two attendants of his own. They had now rowed from the ship a considerable distance, and as during that time they all kept a profound silence, Pompey, willing to begin the discourse, accosted Septimius, whose face he recollected. "Methinks, friend," said he, "that you and I "were once fellow-soldiers together." Septimius gave only a nod with his head, without uttering a word, or instancing the least civility. Pompey, therefore took out a paper, on which he had minuted a speech he intended to make to the king, and began reading it. In this manner they approached the shore; and Cornelia, whose concern had never suffered her to lose sight of her husband, began to conceive hope, when she perceived the people on the strand crowding down along the coasts, as if anxious to receive him. But her hopes were soon destroyed; for that instant, as Pompey rose, supporting himself upon his freedman's arm, Septimius stabbed him in the back, and was seconded by Achillas.

Pompey, perceiving his death inevitable, disposed himself to meet it with decency, and covering his face with his robe, in silence resigned himself to his fate. At this horrid sight, Cornelia

nelia shrieked so loud as to be heard on shore. But the danger she was in did not allow the mariners time to look on; they immediately set sail; and the wind proving favourable, they fortunately escaped the pursuit of the Egyptian galleys.

Pompey's murderers having cut off his head, caused it to be embalmed, the better to preserve its features; designing it for a present to Cæsar. The body was thrown naked on the strand, and abandoned to every insult. However, his faithful freedman, Philip, watched it with a fond attachment; and when the crowd was dispersed, he washed it in the sea, and perceiving the wreck of a fishing-boat, he composed a pile to burn it. While thus piously employed, he was accosted by an old Roman soldier, who had served under Pompey in his youth: "Who art thou," said he, "that art making these humble preparations for Pompey's funeral?" Philip having answered that he was one of his freedmen, "Alas," replied the soldier, "permit me to share in this honour: among all the miseries of my exile, it will be my last sad comfort, that I have been able to assist at the funeral of my old commander, and touch the body of the bravest general that ever Rome produced." They now joined in giving the corpse the last rites; and collecting the ashes, buried them under a little rising earth, scraped together with their hands, over which was afterwards placed the following inscription: "He, whose merits deserve a temple, can now scarce find a tomb.*"

Such

* It appears, from the best authorities, that the beautiful c[illegible]n, standing near the spot where Pompey met his fate, and

Such was the melancholy end, and such the mean funeral, of Pompey the Great: a man who had many opportunities of enslaving his country, but rejected them all with disdain. He was fonder indeed of glory than of power, of praise than command, and was rather vain than ambitious. His talents in war were inferior only to those of Cæsar; it was, therefore, his peculiar misfortune to contend with a man, in whose presence all other military merit lost its lustre. Whether his aims during the last war were more pure than Cæsar's, must for ever remain doubtful, as they could not be tried by the event. But certain it is, that he frequently rejected all offers of accommodation, and pluming himself on the superior justice of his cause, began to forget the instability of fortune, and to menace before he possessed the power. But with whatever mildness he might have conducted himself, in case of victory, it was impossible he could have exceeded the moderation which Cæsar shewed. Pompey, indeed, is generally considered as the champion of liberty; and therefore the generous soul sympathizes in his fate; but the fact is, Rome was become too much depraved, and too much sunk in luxury, any longer to be able to preserve its freedom. Its unprincipled patricians, and its venal citizens, were alike pre-disposed for slavery: the universal relaxation of morals required despotic power to curb them; and from this period the Roman empire could not exist without a master.

and which is still honoured with his name, was not erected to his memory, but only appropriated by the admiration and regret of posterity to keep in remembrance so great a man

CHAP. XIII.

From the Death of Pompey to the Time when Augustus resumed the Reins of the Empire.

THE fortune of Cæsar has been commended; but his prudence and abilities seem to have merited success. At the head of any army, he would have been victorious; in any republic, he would have been the first man; for he possessed the most transcendant talents, and was goaded on by an insatiable ambition, which demanded the exercise of them all. Having gained a complete victory over his rival, he resolved to avail himself of it to the utmost, and to pursue the last advantage. Hearing that Pompey was at Amphipolis, he sent off his troops before him, and then embarked on board a light vessel, in order to cross the Hellespont. In the middle of the strait, he fell in with one of Pompey's commanders, at the head of ten ships of war. Cæsar knew that it was equally impossible for him either to fight or fly, and therefore, with the greatest gallantry, bore up to him, and commanded him to submit. The other, awed by the terror of the victor's name, instantly surrendered himself and his fleet at discretion.

From thence he continued his voyage to Ephesus, and then to Rhodes; and, suspecting that Pompey, who had been there, was fled to Egypt, he instantly set sail for that kingdom, and arrived at Alexandria with no more than four thousand

thousand men. Upon his landing, the first accounts he received were of Pompey's miserable end; and soon after, one of the murderers presented his head and ring, in order as he supposed, to propitiate the conqueror. But Cæsar had too much humanity to be pleased with such an horrid spectacle: he turned away from it with disgust; and, after a short pause, gave vent to his sensibility in a flood of tears. He shortly after ordered a magnificent tomb to be built to his memory, on the spot where he was murdered; and a temple to be erected near, consecrated to Nemesis, the goddess supposed to take vengeance on those that oppress the miserable.

The Egytians having dared to violate the rights of a suppliant in regard to Pompey, conceived a design of emancipating themselves wholly from the Roman power. They first began to take offence at Cæsar's carrying the ensigns before him as he entered the city. Photinus, the eunuch, also treated him with great disrespect, and even attempted his life. Cæsar, however, concealed his resentment till he had a force sufficient to punish this treachery; and sending privately for the legions nearest to Egypt, he, in the mean time, pretended to repose an entire confidence in the king's ministers, making great entertainments, and assisting at the conferences of the philosophers who were in great numbers at Alexandria. But no sooner was he joined by a sufficient body of forces than he changed his manner, and declared that, as a Roman consul, it was his duty to settle the succession of the Egyptian throne.

It should be premised, that at that time there were two pretenders to the crown of Egypt:

 [illegible]y,

Ptolemy, the acknowledged king; and the celebrated Cleopatra, his sister; to whom, by the custom of the country, he also was married; and who, by his father's will, shared jointly in the succession. Not content with a bare participation of power, Cleopatra aimed at governing alone; but being opposed in her views by the Roman senate, she was banished into Syria with Arsinoë, her younger sister. Cæsar gave her new hopes of acquiring the government, and cited both her and her brother to plead their cause before him. Photimus, the young king's guardian, rejected the proposal, and sent an army of twenty thousand men to besiege Alexandria, which was then in the possession of the Romans. Cæsar bravely repulsed the enemy for some time; but finding the city of too great an extent to be defended by the force he then commanded, he retired to the palace which commanded the harbour, where he purposed to make his stand. Achillas, the Egyptian general, attacked him there with great vigour, and endeavoured to make himself master of the fleet that lay before the palace. Cæsar too well knew the importance of those ships in the hands of an enemy; and therefore burned them all, in spite of every effort to prevent him. He next possessed himself of the isle of Pharos, the key to the Alexandrian port; by which means he was enabled to receive the supplies which were sent him, and to bid defiance to the united force of the Egyptians.

In the mean time Cleopatra, having heard of the present turn in her favour, judged it the wisest way to rely entirely on the decision of her self-elected judge. But no arts, as she justly conceived,

conceived, were so likely to influence Cæsar as the charms of her person and conversation, which were both extremely seducing. She was now in the bloom of youth, and every feature borrowed grace from the lively turn of her temper: to the most engaging address she joined the most harmonious voice, which the historians of her time compare to the best tuned instrument. To heighten these natural accomplishments, she possessed a great share of learning, and could give audience to the ambassadors of seven different nations without an interpreter. The chief difficulty was to gain admittance to Cæsar, her enemies being in possession of all the avenues that led to the palace. To effect this, she went on board a small vessel, and in the evening, landed near the palace, where, being wrapt up in a coverlet, she was carried by one Apolodorus into his very chamber. Her address, at first, pleased him; her wit and understanding fanned the flame; her caresses, which were carried beyond the bounds of innocence, brought him entirely over to her views.

While Cleopatra was thus employed, her sister Arsinoë was not idle. She had found means, by the assistance of one Ganymede, her confident, to make a large division in the Egyptian army in her favour; and soon after, by a sudden revolution, she caused Achillas to be murdered, and Ganymede to take the command in his stead, and to carry on the siege with greater vigour than before. Cæsar's diligence counteracted several of his designs; but at last he made himself master of a bridge which joined the isle of Pharos to the continent, and it was found necessary to dislodge him. In the heat of the

action some mariners, partly through curiosity, and partly ambition, came and joined the combatants; but, being seized with a panic, instantly fled, and spread a general terror through the army. Cæsar's utmost endeavours to rally his forces were vain; the confusion was past remedy, and numbers were drowned or put to the sword, in attempting to escape. In this dilemma he retired to a ship, in order to reach the palace, which was just opposite; but he was no sooner on board, than great numbers flocked after him: upon which, apprehensive of the ship's sinking, he jumped into the sea, and swam two hundred paces to the fleet that lay before the palace, holding his own commentaries in his left hand above water, and his coat of mail with his teeth.

The Egyptians, finding their efforts to take the palace ineffectual, endeavoured at least to get their king out of Cæsar's power, who had been secured in the beginning of the dispute. For this purpose they practised their customary arts of dissimulation, professing the sincerest desire of peace, and only wanting the presence of their lawful prince to give a sanction to the treaty. Cæsar, though aware of their perfidy, concealed his suspicions, and suffered Ptolemy to join them; but, the instant he was set at liberty, instead of entering into a treaty, he made every effort to give vigour to hostilities.

After being hemmed in for some time by this artful and insidious enemy, Cæsar was at last relieved from his mortifying situation by Mithridates Pergamenus, one of his most faithful partisans, who came with an army to his assistance.

This

This general, collecting a numerous body of forces in Syria, marched into Egypt, took Pelusium, and at last joined Cæsar, and a great slaughter of the Egyptians ensued; Ptolemy himself attempting to escape on board a vessel that was sailing down the river, was drowned by the ship's sinking; and Cæsar thus became master of Egypt, without further opposition. He then appointed Cleopatra, with her younger brother, an infant, joint governors, according to the intent of their father's will; and drove Arsinoë with her general Ganymede into banishment.

Having added this to his other successes, Cæsar for a time abandoned every object of ambition for the charms of Cleopatra. Instead of quitting Egypt to quell the remains of Pompey's party, he passed whole nights in feasts, and in all the excesses of high-wrought luxury. He even resolved to attend the queen up the Nile into Ethiopia; but the brave veterans who had long followed his fortune, boldly reprehended his conduct, and refused to be partners in so infamous an expedition. Thus, at length, roused from his lethargy, he resolved to sacrifice love to glory, and to leave Cleopatra, by whom he had a son, afterwards named Cæsario, in order to oppose Pharnaces, who had made some inroads upon the dominions of Rome, in the east.

This prince, who was the son of the great Mithridates, anxious to recover his paternal dominions, seized Armenia and Colchis, and overcame Domitius, who had been sent against him. Upon Cæsar's march, however, to attack him, Pharnaces laboured, by all the arts of negotiation,

gotiation, to avert the impending danger. Cæsar, though exasperated at his crimes and his ingratitude, at first dissembled with the ambassadors; but using all expedition, fell upon the enemy unexpectedly, and in a few hours obtained an easy and complete victory. Pharnaces, attempting to take refuge in his capital, was slain by one of his own commanders: a just punishment for his former parricide. This victory was gained with so much ease, that Cæsar, in writing to a friend at Rome, expressed the rapidity of his conquest in three words, *veni, vidi, vici.*

Having bestowed the government of Armenia upon Ariobarzanes, that of Judea upon Hyrcanus and Antipater, and that of Bosphorus upon Mithridates, Cæsar embarked for Italy, where he arrived sooner than his enemies could expect, but not before his affairs there absolutely required his presence. He had been, during his absence, created consul for five years, dictator for one year, and tribune of the people for life. But Antony, who acted as his deputy at Rome, had filled the city with riot and debauchery; and many commotions ensued, which nothing but the opportune arrival of Cæsar could have appeased. By his moderation and humanity, he soon restored order; and by his impartiality to all parties, gradually melted them into his own. Having thus confirmed his authority at home, he prepared to march into Africa, where Pompey's party had rallied under Scipio and Cato, assisted by Joba, king of Mauritania. At this crisis, a mutiny broke out in his own army. These veteran legions, who had hitherto conquered all that came before them,

began

began to murmur, for not having received the rewards which they had expected for their past services, and to insist upon their discharge. The sedition broke out in the tenth legion, which till then had been distinguished by its valour and attachment to its general. The whole army being infected with a spirit of insubordination, marched from Campania towards Rome, pillaging and plundering all the country in their route. Cæsar immediately ordered the gates of the city to be shut, and such troops as were in readiness, to defend the walls: he then went out alone to meet the mutineers, notwithstanding the representation of his friends. Upon coming into the Campius Martius, where the most tumultuous were assembled, he boldly mounted the tribunal; and, with a stern air, demanded of the soldiers what they wanted, or who had conducted them there? A conduct so resolute seemed to disconcert the whole band: they began to palliate their conduct by complaining, that, being worn out with fatigue, they were anxious to obtain a discharge. "then take your discharge," cried Cæsar with his usual magnanimity; "and when I shall have gained new conquests with other troops, I promise that you shall be partakers in the spoil." So much generosity quite confounded the seditious; they unanimously entreated his pardon, and even offered to be decimated to obtain it. Cæsar for a while seemed to continue inflexible; and at last granted as a favour what it was his interest earnestly to desire; but the tenth legion never recovered his former confidence, which in this instance it had so grossly abused.

Cæsar

Cæsar now hastened to land with a small party in Africa, in order to face Scipio, leaving directions for the rest of his army to follow him. After many movements, and several indecisive conflicts, he resolved at last to come to a general action. For this purpose he invested the city of Tapsus, assuring himself that Scipio would attempt its relief. The latter, joining with the young king of Mauritania, advanced with his army, and encamping near Cæsar, they soon came to an engagement. Cæsar's fortune attended him; the enemy received a complete and final overthrow, with little or no loss on his side. Juba and Petreius killed each other in despair; Scipio, attempting to escape by sea into Spain, fell in among the enemy, and was slain: and now, of all the generals of that unfortunate party, Cato alone remained.

This extraordinary man, whom no prosperity could elate, nor misfortue depress, having retired into Africa after the battle of Pharsalia, had led the wretched remains of Pompey's army through burning deserts infested with serpents, and was now in the city of Utica, which he had been left to defend. Still in love with even the appearance of the Roman government, he had formed the principal citizens into a senate; and conceived a resolution of holding out the town. He accordingly assembled his senators, and demanded their opinion, whether they should defend this last city that owned the cause of freedom? "If," said he, "you "are willing to submit to Cæsar, I must acquiesce; but, if you are willing to hazard the "dangers of defending the last remains of li-

"berty,

"'berty, let me be your guide and companion
" in so great an enterprise. Rome has often re-
" covered from greater calamities than these;
" and there are many motives to encourage our
" attempt. Spain has declared in our cause;
" and Rome itself bears the yoke with indig-
" nation. With respect to the hazards we must
" encounter, why should they terrify us? Ob-
" serve our enemy: he braves every danger, and
" encounters every fatigue, to undo mankind, and
" make his country wretched; and shall we
" scruple to suffer a short interval of pain, in
" a cause so glorious?" This speech had at first a surprising effect; but the enthusiasm for liberty soon subsibing, he found it was vain to attempt to animate men to be free, who seemed naturally prone to slavery. He therefore desired some of his friends to save themselves by sea, and advised others to rely upon Cæsar's clemency; observing, that, as to himself, he was at last victorious. After this, supping cheerfully among his friends, he retired to his apartment, where he behaved with unusual tenderness to his son, and to all his friends. When he came into his bed-chamber, he laid himself down, and with deep attention read for some time, Plato's Dialogue on the Immortality of the Soul. Happening, however, to cast his eyes to the head of his bed, he was much surprised not to find his sword there, which had been removed by his son's order. Upon this, calling one of his domestics to know what was become of it, and receiving no answer, he resumed his studies; but some time after renewed his enquiries about his sword. When he had done reading, and perceiving that nobody obeyed him, he called all his domestics one after

after the other, and, with a peremptory air, demanded his sword once more. His son entered soon after, and with tears besought him, in the most humble and affectionate manner, to change his resolution; but, receiving a stern reprimand, he desisted from his persuasions. His sword being at length brought him, he appeared tranquil, and cried out, "Now am I master of my-"self." He then took up the book again, which he read twice over, and fell into a profound sleep. Upon waking, he called to one of his freedmen, to know if his friends were embarked, or if any thing yet remained that could be done to assure their safety. The freedman informing him that all was quiet, he was ordered again to leave the room; and Cato was no sooner alone than he stabbed himself: but the wound not being immediately mortal, with a fierceness of resolution, he tore out his own bowels, and expired with stoical apathy; tarnishing by this suicide all his former glory; for much easier is it to escape from life than to bear the presence of ills with fortitude and resignation, qualities which Cato evidently wanted.

Thus died Cato; a man, who, in all but the last action of his life *, was one of the most faultless characters recorded in the Roman history. He was severe, but not cruel; and ready to pardon much greater faults in others than he could forgive in himself. His haughtiness and austerity seemed rather the effect of principle than natural

* As some extenuation of Cato's conduct, though false principles ought not to excuse it, it may be alleged that the stoics, whose tenets he followed, maintained, "that life was only a gift, which might be returned to the donor, when the present was no longer grateful."

constitution;

constitution; for no man was more humane to his dependents, or better loved by those about him. The constancy of his opposition to Cæsar, proceeded from a thorough conviction of the injustice of his cause; and from his own unconquerable love of freedom.

This event terminating the war in Africa, Cæsar returned in triumph to Rome; and, as if he had abridged all his former triumphs only to increase the splendour of this, the citizens were astonished at the magnificence of the procession, and the number of the countries he had subdued. It lasted four days: the first was for Gaul, the second for Egypt, the third for his victories in Asia, and the fourth for that over Juba in Africa. His veterans, covered with scars, attended their triumphant general, crowned with laurels to the capitol. To every one of these he gave a sum equivalent to about a hundred and fifty pounds of our money; double that sum to the centurions; and four times as much to the superior officers. The citizens also participated in his bounty; to every one of whom he distributed ten bushels of corn, ten pounds of oil, and a sum of money of the value of about two pounds sterling. After this, he entertained the people at above twenty thousand tables, and exhibited a combat of gladiators, which drew a concourse of spectators from every part of Italy.

The people, intoxicated with the allurements of pleasure, and forgetting that they were the mere gilding of slavery, seemed eager only to find out new modes of homage, and unusual epithets of adulation. Cæsar was now created by a new title, *Magister Morum*, or master of the morals of the people; he received the title

of

of Emperor and Father of his Country; his person was declared sacred; and, in short, upon him alone devolved for life all the great dignities of the state *. He immediately began his reign by repressing vice and encouraging virtue. He committed the power of judicature to the senators and the knights alone; and by many sumptuary laws restrained the scandalous luxuries of the rich. He proposed rewards to the parents of a numerous offspring, and took the most prudent methods of re-peopling the city, which had been exhausted by civil broils.

Having thus settled affairs at Rome, he again found himself under a necessity of going into Spain, to oppose an army which had been raised there under the two sons of Pompey, and Labienus, his former general. He proceeded in this expedition with his usual celerity, and arrived in Spain before the enemy thought him yet departed from Rome. Cneius and Sextus, Pompey's sons, profiting by their unhappy father's example, resolved as much as possible to protract the war; so that the first operations of the two armies were spent in sieges and fruitless attempts to surprise each other. Cæsar, however, after taking many cities from the enemy, and pursuing Pompey with unwearied perseverance, at last compelled him to come to a battle upon the plains of Munda. Pompey drew up his men by break of day, upon the declivity of a hill, with great exactness and order. Cæsar drew up his men like-

A. C. 40. U. C. 708.

* As Pontifex Maximus, or high-priest, he set about reforming the calendar, and the regulations he established are not yet wholly superseded.

wise

wise in the plain below, and, after advancing a little way from his trenches, ordered them to make a halt, expecting the enemy to come down from the hill. This delay made Cæsar's soldiers begin to murmur, while Pompey's with full vigour poured down upon them, and a dreadful conflict ensued. The first shock was so dreadful, that Cæsar's troops, who had hitherto been used to conquer, began to waver. He had often fought for glory, but here he fought for life, and threw himself several times into the thickest of the battle. "What," cried he, "are you go-"ing to surrender your general, who is grown "grey in fighting at your head, to a parcel of "boys?" The tenth legion, willing to recover their general's lost esteem, exerted themselves with more than usual bravery; and a party of horse being detached by Labienus from the camp in pursuit of a body of Numidian cavalry, Cæsar cried aloud, "They are fleeing." This cry instantly spread itself through both armies, exciting the one as much as it depressed the other; now, therefore, the tenth legion pressed forward, and a total rout, with desperate valour, ensued. Thirty thousand men were killed on Pompey's side, and amongst them was Labienus, whom Cæsar ordered to be buried with the funeral honours of a general officer. Cneius Pompey escaped with a few horsemen to the sea-side, but finding his passage intercepted by Cæsar's lieutenant, he was obliged to seek for a retreat in an obscure cavern. There, wounded and destitute of all kinds of succour, he patiently awaited the approach of the enemy. He was quickly discovered by some of Cæsar's troops, who presently cut off his head and brought it

to the conqueror. His brother Sextus, however, concealed himself so well, that he escaped all pursuit.

Cæsar having by this decisive battle vanquished all his open enemies, he returned to Rome, for the last time, to receive new dignities and honours, and to enjoy in his own person an accumulation of all the great offices of the state. Still, however, he affected great moderation in the enjoyment of his power; he left the consuls to be named by the people; but, as he possessed all the authority of the office, it from that time began to sink into contempt. He enlarged the number of senators; but, as he had previously destroyed their power, their dignity was lost. Having first deprived those who had borne arms against him of all means of resistance, he gave them a general pardon. He even set up once more the statues of Pompey, which had been thrown down. In short, if his clemency, his justice and moderation, did not proceed from principle, yet they had all the effects of virtues, as far as the public was concerned.

The Roman people at this time having no war of any consequence on their hands, Cæsar set about adorning the city with magnificent buildings: he rebuilt Carthage and Corinth; sending colonies to both cities; he undertook to level several mountains in Italy, to drain the Pontine marshes near Rome, and designed to cut through the isthmus of Peloponnesus. Thus, with a mind that could never remain inactive, he meditated projects and designs beyond the limits of the longest life; but the greatest of all was his intended expedition against the Parthians,

thians, by which he designed to revenge the death of Crassus who having penetrated too far into their country, was overthrown, himself taken prisoner, and put to death, by having molten gold poured down his throat, as a punishment for his former avarice. Thence Cæsar intended to pass through Hyrcania, and enter. Scythia along the banks of the Caspian sea; then to open himself a way through the almost impenetrable forests of Germany into Gaul, and so return to Rome. These were the aims of ambition or glory; but the jealousy of a few individuals destroyed them all.

The senate, with an adulation which marked the degeneracy of the times, continued to load him with fresh honours; and he received them with equal vanity. They called one of the months of the year after his name; they stamped money with his image; they ordered his statue to be set up in all the cities of the empire; they instituted public sacrifices on his birth-day; and talked, even in his life time, of enrolling him among the number of their gods. Antony, at one of their public festivals, foolishly ventured to offer him a diadem; but he put it away several times; receiving, at every refusal, loud acclamations from the people. One day, however, when the senate ordered him some particular honours, he neglected to rise from his seat; and from that moment envy began to mark him for destruction. Mankind are ever more prone to take offence at insult than injury. It began, therefore, to be rumoured, that he intended to make himself king; and, though in fact he was possessed of the power, the people could not endure the name. Whether he

really designed to assume that empty honour must now for ever remain a secret; but, when informed by those about him of the jealousies of many persons who envied his power, he declared, "That he had rather die once by treason, than live continually in apprehension of it." Being advised to beware of Brutus, in whom he had for some time reposed the greatest confidence, he opened his breast, all scarred with wounds, saying, "Can you think Brutus cares for such poor pillage as this?" and being one night at supper, as his friends disputed among themselves what death was easiest, he replied, "That which was most sudden, and least expected." Amidst this confidence and composure, however, a deep-laid conspiracy was absolutely in agitation against him, consisting of no less than sixty senators; at the head of whom were Brutus, whose life Cæsar had spared after the battle of Pharsalia; and Cassius, who was pardoned soon after; both prætors for the present year. Brutus always valued himself on his descent from that Brutus who first gave liberty to Rome. The passion for freedom seemed to have been transmitted down to him with the blood of his ancestors. But though he detested tyranny, yet he could not forbear loving the tyrant, from whom he had received the most signal benefits, and who besides was a man in himself to be loved. However, at last patriotism broke all the ties of private friendship, and he entered into a conspiracy which was to destroy his benefactor. Cassius, on the other hand, was impetuous and proud, and hated Cæsar's person still more than his cause. He had often sought an

an opportunity of gratifying his revenge by assassination, which took rise rather from private malignity than from public virtue.

The conspirators, in order to give a colour of justice to their proceedings, put off the execution of their designs to the ides of March, on which Cæsar was to be offered the crown. The augurs had foretold that this day would be fatal to him; and the night preceding he heard his wife Calphurnia lamenting in her sleep; and being awakened, she confessed to him, that she dreamed of his being assassinated in her arms. These omens, in some measure, began to change his intention of attending the senate that day, as he had designed; but one of the conspirators coming in, prevailed upon him to keep his resolution, by bantering his superstition, and describing the preparations that were made for his appearance. As he proceeded to the senate, a slave hastened to carry him information of the conspiracy, but could not come near him for the crowd. Artamidorus, a Greek philosopher, who had discovered the whole plot, delivered him a memorial; but Cæsar gave it, with other papers, to one of his secretaries without reading. Having at length entered the senate-house, where the conspirators were prepared to receive him, he met Spurina, an augur, who had foretold his danger, to whom he said, smiling, "Well, Spurina, the ides of March are come." "Yes," replied the augur, "but they are not "yet over." As soon as he had taken his place, the conspirators came near him under pretence of saluting him; and Cimber, who was one of them, approached in a suppliant posture, pretending to sue for his brother's pardon, who had been

been banished by his order. All the conspirators seconded him with great earnestness; and Cimber, seeming to sue with still greater submission, took hold of the bottom of his robe, holding him so as to prevent his rising. This was the signal agreed on. Casca, who was behind, stabbed him, though slightly, in the shoulder. Cæsar instantly turned round, and with the style of his tablet, wounded him in the arm. However, all the conspirators being now roused, and enclosing him round, he received a second stab from an unknown hand in the breast, while Cassius wounded him in the face. He still defended himself with great vigour, rushing among them, and throwing down such as opposed him, till he saw Brutus * among the conspirators, who, coming up, struck his dagger into his thigh. From that moment Cæsar thought no more of defending himself, but looking steadfastly on him, exclaimed, "And you too, my son!" Then covering his head, and spreading his robe before him, in order to fall with greater decency, he sank down at the base of Pompey's statue, after receiving three-and-twenty wounds from hands which he vainly supposed had been disarmed by his benefits, or awed by his power.

Cæsar was killed in the fifty-sixth year of his age, and about fourteen years after he began the conquest of the world. In his progress and in his fate, we behold all that can gratify ambition, and all that can deter tyranny. No

* Even by those who consider Cæsar as a tyrant, the conduct of Brutus cannot be excused. To receive favours, and then to prove ungrateful for them, marks a baseness of mind that no public virtue can render amiable.

power

power can be safe that is not voluntarily conferred; and that homage is always to be suspected which is paid to usurped authority.

The death of Cæsar produced a crisis in human affairs, which was never known before: there was no longer any tyrant, and yet liberty was extinguished; for the causes which had contributed to its destruction still subsisted to prevent its revival. The senate had so often made an ill use of their power, that the people shuddered at the thought of trusting them with it again. In short, a mutual jealousy prevailed, and patriotism was no more.

As soon as the conspirators had dispatched Cæsar, they began to address themselves to the senate, in order to vindicate the motives of their enterprise, and to excite them to join in procuring their country's freedom; but the universal coldness with which their expostulations were received, soon taught them to fear that their conduct would find few advocates, and fewer supporters. All the senators, who were not accomplices, fled; and the people also, being now alarmed, left their usual occupations, and ran tumultuously through the city; some actuated by their fears, and others by a desire of plunder. In this state of confusion, the conspirators all retired to the capitol, and guarded its accesses by a body of gladiators which Brutus had in pay. It was in vain they alleged that they only struck for freedom, and had killed a tyrant who usurped the rights of mankind. The people, accustomed to luxury and ease, little regarded their professions, dreading more the dangers of poverty than the infamy of slavery.

The friends of the late dictator, who had imbibed his principles and were not warned by his fate,

fate, now began to conceive views of ambition, and to push them under the veil of justice. Of this number was Antony, a man of moderate abilities and excessive vices; ambitious of power, only because it gave his pleasures a wider range; but skilled in war, to which he had been trained from his youth. He was consul for this year, and resolved, with Lepidus, a man of a similar disposition, to seize this opportunity of gaining that power which Cæsar had died for usurping. Lepidus took possession of the Forum, with a band of soldiers at his devotion; and Antony, being consul, was permitted to command them. Their first step was to possess themselves of all Cæsar's papers and money; and the next to convene the senate, in order to determine that delicate question, Whether Cæsar had been a legal magistrate, or a tyrannical usurper; and whether those who killed him merited rewards or punishments? There were many among them who had received all their promotions from Cæsar, and had acquired large fortunes in consequence of his appointments. To vote him an usurper, therefore, would be to endanger their property; and yet to declare him innocent, might endanger the state. In this dilemma, they seemed willing to reconcile extremes; they approved all the acts of Cæsar, and yet granted a general pardon to the conspirators against him.

This decree was very far from giving Antony satisfaction, as it granted security to a number of men who were the avowed enemies of tyranny. As, however, the senate had ratified all Cæsar's acts without distinction; he formed a scheme, upon this, of making him rule, when dead, as imperiously

imperiously when he was living. Being, as was said, possessed of Cæsar's papers, he so far gained upon his secretary, as to make him insert whatever he thought proper. By these means, large sums of money, which Cæsar would never have bestowed, were said to be distributed among the people; and every man who had any seditious designs against the government was there sure of finding a gratuity. Things being in this forwardness, he demanded that Cæsar's funeral obsequies should be performed. Accordingly, the body being brought forth into the Forum with the utmost solemnity, Antony, who charged himself with these last duties of friendship, began his operetions upon the passions of the people by the prevailing motives of private interest. He first read to them Cæsar's will, in which he had left Octavius, his sister's grandson, his heir, permitting him to take the name of Cæsar; and three parts of his private fortune Brutus was to inherit iu case of his death. The Roman people were left the gardens which he had on the other side of the Tiber; and every citizen, in particular, was to receive three hundred sesterces. This last bequest not a little contributed to rivet the people's affection for their late dictator; they now began to consider him as a father, who, not satisfied with doing them the greatest good while living, thought of benefiting them even after death. As Antony continued reading, the multitude began to be moved, and sighs and lamentations were heard from every quarter. Antony, seeing the audience favourable to his designs, now began to address the assembly in a more pathetic strain: he presented before them Cæsar's bloody robe, and

and then displaying an image which to them appeared the body of Cæsar all covered with wounds, "This," cried he, "this is all "that is left of him who was befriended by the "gods, and loved by mankind even to adora-"tion. This is he to whom we vowed eternal "fidelity, and whose person both the senate and "the people concurred to declare sacred. Be-"hold now the execution of these vows! behold "here the proofs of our gratitude! The bravest "of men destroyed by the most ungrateful of "mankind! He, who showered down his bene-"fits upon the betrayers, found his death as the "only return! Is there none to revenge his cause? "Is there none who, mindful of former benefits, "will shew himself now deserving of them? "Yes, there is one: Behold me, O Jupiter, "thou avenger of the brave, ready to offer up "my life on this glorious occasion! And you, "ye deities, protectors of the Roman empire, "accept my solemn vows, and favour the rec-"titude of my intentions!" The people could now no longer contain their indignation; they unanimously cried out for revenge. The soldiers who had fought under Cæsar, burnt, with his body, their coronets, and other marks of conquest with which he had honoured them. A great number of the first matrons in the city threw in their ornaments also; till, at length, rage succeeding to sorrow, the multitude ran, with flaming brands from the pile, to set fire to the conspirators' houses. In this rage of resentment, meeting with one Cinna, whom they mistook for another of the same name who was in the conspiracy, they tore him in pieces. The conspirators themselves being well guarded, easily

easily repulsed the multitude; but perceiving the rage of the people, they thought it safest to retire from the city. The populace, thus left to themselves, set no bounds to their sorrow and gratitude. Divine honours were granted to Cæsar; an altar was erected on the place where his body was burnt; and afterwards a column, inscribed to the father of his country.

In the mean time, Antony, who had excited this flame, resolved to convert it to his own advantage. Having gained the people, by his zeal in Cæsar's cause, he next endeavoured to bring over the senate, by a seeming concern for the freedom of the state. He therefore proposed to recall Sextus, Pompey's only remaining son, who had concealed himself in Spain since the death of his father, and to grant him the command of all the fleets of the empire. His next step to their confidence, was by quelling a sedition of the people who rose to revenge the death of Cæsar, and, putting their leader, Amatius, to death, who pretended to be the son of Marius. After this, pretending to dread the resentment of the multitude, he demanded a guard for the security of his person. The senate granted his request; and, under this pretext, he drew round him a body of six thousand resolute men, attached to his interest, and ready to execute his commands. Thus he continued every day making rapid strides to absolute power; all the authority of government was lodged in his hands and those of his two brothers; the consular, tribunitian, and prætorian powers. His vows to revenge Cæsar's death seemed either postponed, or totally forgotten; and his only

aims seemed to be to confirm himself in that power, which he had thus artfully acquired. But an obstacle to his ambition arose from a quarter in which he least expected it. This was from Octavius Cæsar, afterwards surnamed Augustus, by which title we shall henceforward designate him. He was the grand nephew and adopted son of Cæsar, and happened to be at Appollonia when his kinsman was slain. He was then but eighteen years old; and was engaged in a course of study. Upon the news of Cæsar's death, however, he resolved to return to Rome, to claim the inheritance, and revenge the fate of his uncle. In Antony he expected to find a zealous coadjutor; but he was greatly disappointed. Antony, who had formed other designs, gave him but a very cold reception; and instead of granting him the fortune left him by the will, delayed the payment of it upon various pretences, hoping to check his ambition by limiting his circumstances. But, Augustus seems to have inherited, not only the wealth, but the spirit of his uncle: instead, therefore, of abating his claims, he even sold his own patrimonial estate, to pay such legacies as Cæsar had left; and particularly that to the people. By these means he gained a degree of popularity, which his enemies vainly laboured to diminish; and which, in fact, nature had formed him to acquire. His conversation was elegant and insinuating; his face comely and graceful; and his affection to the late dictator so sincere, that every person was charmed, either with his piety or his address. But what added still more to his interest, was the name of Cæsar, which he had assumed; and, in consequence of

which,

which, the former followers of his uncle now flocked in great numbers to him. These he managed with such art, that, while he gained their affections, he never lost their esteem; so that Antony now began to conceive a violent jealousy for the talents of his young opponent, and certainly not without reason. In short, the state was divided into three distinct factions: that of Augustus, who aimed at procuring Cæsar's inheritance, and revenging his death: that of Antony, whose sole view was to obtain absolute power; and that of the conspirators, who endeavoured to restore the senate to its former authority, and thus to re-establish liberty.

Antony, being raised by the people to the government of Cisalpine Gaul, contrary to the inclinations of the senate, resolved to enter upon his province immediately, and oppose Brutus, who commanded a small body of troops there, while his army was yet entire. He accordingly left Rome, and marching thither, commanded Brutus to depart. Brutus, being unable to oppose him, retired with his forces; but being pursued by Antony, he was at last besieged in the city of Mutina.

Meanwhile Augustus, who had gained over a body of ten thousand men, returned to Rome; and being resolved, before he attempted to execute vengeance on the conspirators, if possible, to diminish the power of Antony, began by bringing over the senate to second his designs. In this he succeeded, chiefly by the credit of Cicero, who had long been inimical to Antony's views. Accordingly, by his persuasion, a decree passed, ordering Antony to raise the siege of Mutina, to evacuate Cisalpine Gaul, and

to await the further orders of the senate upon the banks of the Rubicon. Antony treated the decree with contempt; and, instead of obeying, began to profess, that he had been already too submissive. Nothing now, therefore, remained for the senate, but to declare him an enemy to the state, and to send Augustus, with the army he had raised, to curb his insolence. Augustus was very ready to offer his services for this expedition, in order to revenge his own private injuries, before he undertook those of the public. The two consuls, Hirtius and Pansa, joined all their forces; and thus combined, they marched, at the head of a numerous army, against Antony, into Cisalpine Gaul. He, on his part, was not slow in opposing them. After one or two ineffectual conflicts, both armies came to a general engagement; in which Antony was defeated, and compelled to flee to Lepidus, who commanded a body of forces in Farther Gaul. This victory, however, produced effects very different from the expectations of the senate. The two consuls were mortally wounded; but Pansa, previously to his death, calling Augustus to his bed-side, advised him to join with Antony, telling him, that the senate only desired to depress both, by opposing them to each other. The advice of the dying consul made a deep impression on the mind of Augustus: so that, from that time, he only sought a pretext to break with the senate. He was willing, however, to sound them thoroughly, before he came to an open rupture; wherefore he sent to demand the consulship, which was refused him. He then thought himself not obliged to keep measures with that assembly, but privately

vately entered into a negotiation with Antony and Lepidus, concerning a junction of forces, and found them as eager to assist, as the senate was to oppose him. Assured of the assistance of Augustus upon their arrival in Italy, they soon crossed the Alps, with an army of seventeen legions, breathing revenge against all their opponents.

The senate now began, too late, to perceive their error, in daring to disoblige Augustus. To atone for it, they gave him the consulship, which they had so lately refused, A. C. 36. with powers superior to all law. The first use Augustus made of his new authority, was to procure a decree for the condemnation of Brutus and Cassius; and, in short, to join his forces with those of Antony and Lepidus.

The first meeting of these three usurpers was near Mutina, upon a little island of the river Panarus, in order that neither might be circumvented by the others. Lepidus first entered; and, finding all things safe, made the signal for the other two to approach. They embraced each other; and Augustus began the conference, by thanking Antony for his zeal, in putting Decimus Brutus to death; who being abandoned by his army, had been taken, and beheaded by Antony's command. They then entered upon the business that lay before them, without any retrospect of the past. Their conference lasted three days; and, in this time, they fixed a division of the government, and determined the fate of millions. To contemplate these men seated, without attendants, on a desolate island, marking out whole cities and nations for destruction, and yet none

to oppose their designs, shews what changes may quickly be wrought in the bravest people in a very short time, and that the age of Fabricius and Cato was no more. The result of their conference was, that the supreme authority should be lodged in their hands, under the title of the Triumvirate, for the space of five years; that Antony should have Gaul; Lepidus, Spain; and Augustus, Africa and the Mediterranean islands. As for Italy, and the eastern provinces, they were to remain in common, until their general enemy was entirely subdued. But the last article of their union deserves execration; it was agreed, that all their enemies should be destroyed, of which each presented a list. In these were comprised, not only the enemies, but the friends of the triumvirate, since the partisans of the one were often found among the opposers of the other. Thus Lepidus gave up his brother Paulus to the vengeance of his colleague; Antony permitted the proscription of his uncle Lucius; and Augustus, to his eternal infamy, sacrificed the immortal Cicero. Three hundred senators, and above two thousand knights, were included in this horrible proscription; their fortunes were confiscated, and their murderers enriched with the spoil. Rome soon felt the effects of this infernal union; nothing but cries and lamentations were to be heard through all the city. None dared to refuse entrance to the assassins, although he had no other hopes of safety; and this city, that was once the beauty of the world, seemed now reduced to desolation by the deliberate malice of an infamous trio.

In this horrid carnage, Cicero was one of those principally sought after. For a while he

evaded

evaded the malice of his pursuers! and set forward from his Tusculan villa, towards the sea-side, with an intent to transport himself directly out of the reach of his enemies. There finding a vessel ready, he presently embarked; but the winds being averse, and the sea wholly uneasy to him, he was obliged to land, and spend the night upon shore. Thence he was forced, by the impunity of his servants, on board again; but weary of life, and declaring he was resolved to die in that country which he had so often saved, he soon went ashore, and proceeded to one of his own country seats in the vicinity. Here he slept soundly for some time, till his servants once more forcibly bore him away in a litter towards the ship, having heard that he was pursued. They were scarcely departed, when the assassins arrived at his house, and, perceiving him to be fled, pursued him immediately towards the sea, and overtook him in a wood that lay near the shore. Their leader was one Popilius Lenus, a tribune of the army, whose life Cicero had formerly defended and saved. As soon as the soldiers appeared, the servants prepared to defend their master's life, at the hazard of their own: but Cicero commanded them to set him down, and to make no resistance. They cut off his head and his hands, returning with these to Rome, as the most agreeable present to their cruel employer. Antony, who was then at Rome, received them with extreme joy, rewarded the murderer with a large sum of money, and placed Cicero's head on the rostrum; from which he had often declaimed against tyranny and oppression. Cicero was slain in the sixty-third year of his age; but not until he had

seen

seen his country ruined before him. "The "glory he obtained," says Julius Cæsar," "was "as much above all other triumphs, as the ex-"tent of the Roman genius was above that of "the bounds of the Roman empire."

Thus the proscription went on to rage for some time with unabated fury. As many as could escape its cruelty either fled into Macedonia to Brutus, or found refuge with young Pompey, who was now in Sicily, and covered the Mediterranean with his numerous navy. At last, both the avarice and vengeance of the Triumviri seemed to be fully glutted: they went into the senate to declare that the proscription was at an end; and Augustus and Antony, leaving Lepidus to defend Rome in their absence, marched with their army to oppose the conspirators, who were now at the head of a formidable army in Asia.

Brutus and Cassius, the principal of the conspirators against Cæsar, being driven from Rome, went into Greece, where they persuaded the Roman students at Athens to declare for the cause of freedom. They then parted; and the former raised a powerful army in Macedonia, and the adjacent countries, while the latter went into Syria, where he soon mustered twelve legions, and reduced his opponent, Dolabella, to such straits as to force him to lay violent hands on himself. Both armies soon after joining at Smyrna, such a formidable force began to revive the declining spirits of the party, and to unite the two generals more closely than ever. Having quitted Italy like distressed exiles, they now found themselves at the head of a flourishing army, and in a condition to support a contest, where

where the empire of the world depended on the event. This astonishing success in raising levies was chiefly owing to the justice, moderation, and humanity of Brutus, who, in every instance, seemed studious of the happiness of his country, regardless of his own.

It was in this flourishing state of their affairs, that the conspirators formed a resolution of going against Cleopatra, who was wholly in the interest of their opponents. They were diverted from this purpose by an information that Augustus and Antony were now upon their march, with forty legions, to attack them. Brutus was inclined to pass with the army into Greece and Macedonia, and there meet the enemy; but Cassius so far prevailed as to have the Rhodians and Lycians first reduced, who had refused their usual contributions. This expedition was immediately accomplished, and extraordinary sums were raised by those means, the Rhodians having scarcely any thing left them but their lives. The Lycians suffered still more severely; for, having shut themselves up in the city of Xanthius, they defended the place against Brutus with such fury, that neither his arts nor entreaties could prevail on them to surrender. At length, the town being set on fire, by their attempting to burn the works of the Romans; Brutus, insead of seizing this opportunity to storm the place, made every effort to preserve it; but the desperate phrensy of the citizens was not to be mollified. Far from thinking themselves obliged to their generous enemy, for the efforts which were made to save them. they resolved to perish in the flames, which they increased by throwing in combustibles of every

every kind. Nothing could exceed the distress of Brutus, upon seeing the townsmen thus resolutely bent on destroying themselves; he rode about the fortifications, stretching out his hands to the Xanthians, and conjuring them to have pity on themselves and their city. But insensible to his expostulations, or their own sufferings, they rushed into the flames with desperate obstinacy, and the whole soon became a heap of undistinguishable ruins. At this horrid spectacle Brutus melted into tears, offering a reward to every soldier who should bring him a Lycian alive. The number of those whom his humanity was able to save, amounted to no more than one hundred and fifty.

Brutus and Cassius met once more at Sardis, and held a private conference, in which they mutually retorted blame on each other's conduct, till becoming warm, they both burst into tears. Their friends, who were standing at the door, overheard the increasing vehemence of their voices, and began to dread the consequences, till Favonius, who valued himself upon a cynical boldness, that knew no restraint, entering the room with a jest, calmed their mutual animosity. Cassius was ready enough to forego his anger, being a man of great abilities, but of an uneven disposition. Brutus, on the contrary, was always perfectly steady. An even gentleness, a noble elevation of sentiment, a strength of mind over which neither vice nor pleasure could have any influence, an inflexible firmness in the defence of justice, composed the character of that great man. In consequence of these qualities, he was beloved by his army, doated upon by his friends, and admired by all good men.

After

After this conference, night coming on, Cassius invited Brutus and his friends to an entertainment, where freedom and cheerfulness, for a while took place of political anxiety, and softened the severity of wisdom. Upon retiring, it was, that Brutus, according to Plutarch, saw a spectre in his tent. He was naturally wakeful; but especially now, when oppressed with such various cares, he only gave a short time, after his nightly repast, to rest, and waking about midnight, generally read or studied till morning. It was in the dead of night when his fancy was probably heated, and his imagination disturbed, that Brutus was thus employed, in reading by a lamp just expiring. On a sudden he thought he heard a noise as if somebody entered, and looking towards the door, he perceived it open. A gigantic figure, with a frightful aspect, stood before him, and continued to gaze upon him with silent severity. At last Brutus had courage to speak to it: "Art thou a dæmon "or a mortal man? and why comest thou to "me?"---"Brutus," replied the phantom, "I "am thy evil genius; thou shalt see me again at "Philippi!"---"Well, then," answered Brutus, without being discomposed, "we shall meet "again." Upon which, the vision vanished, and Brutus, calling to his servants, asked if they had seen any thing; they replied in the negative, and he again resumed his studies.

As Antony and Augustus were now advanced into Macedonia, Brutus and his colleague soon passed over into Thrace, and arrived at the city of Philippi, near which the forces of the triumviri were posted. All mankind now began to regard the approaching armies with terror and

and suspense. The empire of the world once more depended upon the fate of a battle. From victory on the one side, they might expect freedom; but, from the other, a sovereign with despotic power. Brutus was the only man who looked upon these great events with calmness and tranquillity. Indifferent as to success, and satisfied with having done his duty, he said to one of his friends; "If I gain the victory, I shall "restore liberty to my country; if I lose it, by "dying, I shall be delivered from slavery myself: "my condition is fixed; I run no risk."

The republican army consisted of fourscore thousand foot, and twenty thousand horse. The army of the triumviri amounted to a hundred thousand foot, and thirteen thousand horse. Thus prepared on both sides, they encamped near Philippi, a city upon the confines of Thrace, situated upon a mountain, towards the west of which a plain stretched itself, by a gentle declivity, almost fifteen leagues to the banks of the river Strymon. In this plain, about three miles from the town, were two little hills at about a mile distant from each other, defended on one side by mountains, on the other by a march which communicated with the sea. It was upon these two hills that Brutus and Cassius fixed their camps: Brutus on the hill towards the north; Cassius on that towards the south; and in the intermediate space which separated them, they cast up lines and a parapet, from one hill to the other. Thus they kept a firm communication between the two camps, which mutually defended each other. In this commodious situation they could act as they thought proper,

proper, and give battle only when it was deemed advantageous to engage. Behind was the sea, which furnished them with all kinds of provisions; and at twelve miles distant the island of Thasos, which served them for a general magazine. The triumviri, on the other hand, were encamped on the plain below, and were obliged to bring their provisions from fifteen leagues distance; so that it was their interest to hasten an engagement. This they offered several times; but the patriots contented themselves with drawing up their troops at the head of their camps, without descending to the plain. Cassius, aware of his advantage, resolved to harass the enemy, rather than engage them. But Brutus beginning to suspect the fidelity of some of his officers, used all his influence to persuade Cassius to change his resolution; "I am impa-"tient," said he, "to put an end to the mise-"ries of mankind, and in this I have hopes of "succeeding, whether I fall or conquer." His wishes were soon gratified; for Antony's soldiers having with great labour made a road through the marsh which lay to the left of Cassius's camp, by that means opened a communication with the island of Thasos, which lay behind him. Both armies, in attempting to possess themselves of this road,, were drawn at length, to a general engagement; in which the republican leaders seem to have anticipated the worst, and to have determined on a voluntary death in case of a defeat: "We may now, my friend," cried Cassius, embracing Brutus, "boldly face the "enemy; for either we shall be conquerors our-"selves, or be exempt from the fear of those "who are so."

Augustus being sick, the forces of the triumviri were commanded by Antony alone, who began the engagement by a vigorous attack upon the lines of Cassius. Brutus, on the other side, made a dreadful eruption on the army of Augustus, and pushed forward with so much impetuosity, that he broke them upon the first charge. Having penetrated as far as the camp, and cutting in pieces those who were left for its defence, his troops immediately began to plunder; but in the mean time the lines of Cassius were forced, and his cavalry put to flight. Every effort was made that courage or prudence could dictate, by this unfortunate general to make his infantry stand; but he found it impossible to inspire his timorous army with his own resolution. He saw his troops entirely routed, his camp taken and himself obliged to retire under a little hill at some distance. Brutus, who had gained a complete victory, was just returning at this interval with his triumphant army, when he found that all was lost on the part of his associate; he sent out a body of cavalry to bring him news of Cassius, who perceiving them advance towards him, sent one Titinius, to inform himself whether they were friends or enemies. Titinius soon joined this body, who received him with great transport, informing him of their success; but delaying too long, Cassius began to mistake them for what his fears had suggested, and crying out, "that he had exposed his dearest friend "to be taken prisoner," he retired to his tent with one of his freedmen, named Pindarus, who slew him, and then was never heard of after. Immediately after, Titinius arrived in triumph with the body of horsemen: but his joy was turned

turned into anguish upon seeing his friend dead in his tent before him. Accusing his own delay as the canse, he punished it with falling on his sword. Brutus was, by this time, informed of the defeat ot Cassius, and soon after of his death. He seemed scarcely able to restrain the excess of his grief for a man whom he called, "the last of the Romans." He bathed his dead body with his tears; and telling his friends that he thought Cassius happy in being beyond the reach of those misfortunes which remained for them to suffer, he ordered him to be privately removed, lest the general knowledge of his death should dispirit the army. It was, in fact, this precipitate despair of Cassius which seems to have finally and fatally turned the fortune of the day.

The first care of Brutus, when he became sole general, was to rally the dispersed troops of Cassius, and animate them with fresh hopes of victory. As they had lost all they possessed, he promised each man two thousand denarii, as a recompence for his being plundered. This inspired them with new ardour; but Brutus had not confidence sufficient to face the adversary, who offered him battle the ensuing day. His aim was to starve his enemies, who began to be in extreme want of provisions. But his single opinion was over-ruled by the rest of his army, who now grew every day more confident of their strength, and more arrogant in their demands. He was therefore, after a respite of twenty days, obliged to comply with their solicitations to try the fate of a battle. Both armies being drawn out, they remained a long while opposite to each other, without offering to engage.

gage. It is said that the general himself had lost much of his natural ardour, by the return of the spectre the preceding night: however, he encouraged his men as much as possible, and gave the signal for battle within three hours of sun-set. As before, he had the advantage where he commanded in person; but his left wing, fearing to be taken in flank, stretched itself out, in order to enlarge its front; by means of which it became too weak to stand the shock of the enemy. It was there that the army of Brutus began to yield; and Antony pushing forwards, drove the republicans so far back as to be able to turn and attack Brutus in the rear. The troops which had belonged to Cassius communicated their terror to the rest of the forces, till, at last, the whole army gave way. Brutus, surrounded by the most valiant of his officers, fought for a long time with desperate valour. The son of Cato fell fighting by his side, as also the brother of Cassius; at last, he was obliged to yield to necessity, and fled. In the mean time the two triumviri, now assured of victory, expressly commanded that the general should not escape, for fear he should renew the war. Thus the whole body of the enemy seemed chiefly intent on Brutus alone, and his capture inevitable. In this deplorable exigence, Lucilius his friend, resolved by his own death, to effect the general's safety. Perceiving a body of Thracian horse closely pursuing Brutus, and just upon the point of taking him, he boldly threw himself in the way, telling them that he was Brutus. The Thracians, overjoyed with so great a prize, immediately dispatched some of their companions, with the news of

of their success, to the army. Upon this, the ardour of the pursuit abating, Antony marched out to meet his prisoner, and to hasten his death, or insult his misfortunes. Seeing the Thracians approach, he began to prepare himself for the interview; but the faithful Lucilius advancing with a cheerful air, "It is not Brutus," said he, "that is taken; fortune has not yet had the "power of committing so great an outrage upon "virtue. As to my life, it is well lost in pre-"serving his honour; take it, for I have deceived "you." Antony struck with his fidelity, pardoned him upon the spot; and from that time honoured him with his friendship, and loaded him with his favours.

In the mean time Brutus, with a small number of his friends, crossed a rivulet; and, night coming on, he sat down under a rock which concealed him from the pursuit of the enemy. After taking breath for a little time, he cast his eyes up to Heaven, all spangled with stars; and repeated a line from Euripides, containing a wish to the gods, "That guilt should not pass in "this life without punishment!" To this he added another from the same poet: "O Virtue! "thou empty name, I have worshipped thee as "a real good, but find thou art only the slave "of fortune." He then called to mind, with great tenderness, those whom he had seen perish in battle, and sent out Statilius to gain some information of those that remained; but he was soon killed by a party of the enemies' horse. Brutus judging very rightly of his fate, now resolved to die likewise, and spoke to those who stood round him to lend him their last sad assistance. None of them, however, could com-

with with his melancholy demand. Upon this, raising himself up, and stretching out his hands, he spoke to them with a serene countenance, saying, "That he was happy in the fidelity of "his friends; happy in the consciousness of his "own rectitude; and though he fell, yet his "death was more glorious than the triumphs of "the enemy, since they were successful in the "cause of usurpation, and he overthrown in the "defence of virtue." He then retired to a little distance with Strato, who was his master in oratory, and entreated him to do him the last office of friendship; Strato, however, expressed his reluctance to take upon him so shocking an office; but being farther urged, he averted his face, and presented the sword's point to Brutus, who threw himself upon it, and immediately expired. Thus ended Brutus, and with him all hopes of liberty in Rome. The triumviri now became irresistible; and though Pompey's younger son was still alive, and at the head of a powerful army, yet, with the united forces of the empire against him, little could be expected by his friends or feared by his enemies from his greatest efforts.

A.C. 35.

The first care of the triumviri, or rather of Antony and Augustus, for Lepidus had little weight, was, after this decisive battle, to punish those whom they had formerly marked for vengeance. Hortensius, Drusus, and Quintilius Varus, all men of the first rank in the commonwealth, either killed themselves or were slain. A senator and his son were ordered to cast lots for their lives, but both refused it: the father voluntarily gave himself up to the executioner, and the son stabbed himself before his face. Another

other begged to have the rites of burial after his death; to which Augustus replied, "that he "would find a grave in the vultures that devour-"ed him." But chiefly the people lamented to see the head of Brutus sent to Rome, to be thrown at the foot of Cæsar's statue. His ashes, however, were sent to his wife Portia, Cato's daughter, who, following the example of her husband and father, killed herself by swallowing burning coals. It is observed, that of all those who had a hand in the death of Cæsar, not one died a natural death; and such is generally the fate of those who engage in civil broils.

The power of the triumviri being thus established upon the ruin of the commonwealth, they began to think of enjoying that homage to which they had aspired. Antony went into Greece, and spent some time at Athens in philosophic enjoyment. He passed thence over to Asia, where all the monarchs of the East, who acknowledged the Roman power, came to pay him their obedience, or court his favour. In this manner, he proceeded from kingdom to kingdom, attended by a crowd of sovereigns, exacting contributions, distributing rewards, and giving away crowns, with capricious insolence. But, among all the sovereigns of the East, none had such a distinguished place in his regard as Cleopatra, the celebrated queen of Egypt.

Having received orders from Antony to clear herself of some slight imputation of infidelity to his cause; she readily complied, equally conscious of her innocence and the power of her beauty. She was now in her twenty-seventh year, and consequently improved those allure-

ments

ments by art, which, in earlier age, had won the affection of Cæsar. Her address and wit were unrivalled; and though there were some women in Rome her equals in beauty, none could match her in the charms of seducing conversation. Antony was in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, when Cleopatra was resolved to attend his court in person. She sailed down the river Cydnus, at the mouth of which the city stood, with the most sumptuous pageantry. Her galley was covered with gold, the sails of purple, large, and floating in the wind, The oars, of silver, kept tune to the sound of flutes and cymbals. She herself reclined on a couch spangled with stars of gold, and with such ornaments as poets and painters had usually ascribed to Venus. On each side were boys like cupids, who fanned her by turns; while the most beautiful nymphs, dressed like Nereids and Graces, were placed at proper distances around her. Upon the banks of the river were kept burning the most exquisite perfumes, while an infinite number of people gazed upon the sight with a mixture of delight and admiration. Antony was instantly captivated with her beauty; and abandoning business to satisfy his passion, shortly after followed her into Egypt.

While he remained in this country, indulging in the most vicious refinements of voluptuous pleasure, Augustus, who took upon him to lead back the veteran troops and settle them in Italy, was assiduously employed in providing for their subsistence. He had promised them lands at home, as a recompence for their past services; but he could not fulfil his engagements, without expelling

expelling the former inhabitants. In consequence of this, multitudes of women and children, whose tender years and innocence excited universal compassion, daily filled the temples and the streets with their lamentations. Numbers of husbandmen and shepherds came to deprecate the conqueror's intention, or to obtain an habitation in some other part of the world. Among this sad groupe was the poet Virgil, to whom mankind are more indebted than to a thousand conquerors; and who alone, of all his neighbours, obtained the favour of Augustus.

Italy and Rome now felt extreme miseries. The insolent soldiers plundered without restraint; while Sextus Pompey, being master of the sea, cut off all foreign communication, and prevented the people's receiving their usual supplies of corn. To these mischiefs was added the commencement of another civil war. Fulvia, the wife of Antony, who had been left at Rome, felt for some time all the rage of jealousy, and resolved to try every method of reclaiming her husband from the arms of Cleopatra. Considering a breach with Augustus as the only probable means of rousing him from his lethargy; with the assistance of Lucius, her brother-in-law, who was then consul, she began to sow the seeds of dissension. The pretext was, that Antony should have a share in the distribution of the lands. This produced some negociations between them; and Augustus offered to make the veterans themselves umpires in the dispute. Lucius refused to acquiesce: and, being at the head of more than six legions, mostly composed of such as were dispossessed, he resolved to enforce his claims.

Thus

Thus a new war was excited between Augustus and Antony; or, at least, the generals of the latter acting under the assumed sanction of his name. Augustus was victorious: Lucius was constrained to retreat to Perusia, a city of Etruria, where he was closely besieged, and at last reduced to such extremity, by famine, that he came out in person, and delivered himself up to the mercy of the conqueror. Augustus received him very honourably, and generously pardoned him and all his followers; after which he returned to Rome,

Antony, who, during this interval, was revelling in all the studied luxuries procured for him by his insidious mistress, having heard of the fate of his adherents, resolved to oppose Augustus in person. Accordingly, he sailed at the head of a considerable fleet, from Alexandria to Tyre; thence to Cyprus and Rhodes; and had an interview with Fulvia, his wife, at Athens. He much censured her meddling disposition; testified the utmost contempt for her person; and leaving her upon her death-bed, at Sycyon, hastened into Italy to fight Augustus. They met at Brundusium; and it was now thought that the flames of a civil war were going to blaze out afresh. But a negociation being proposed by the activity of Cocceius, a friend to both, a reconciliation was at last effected. All offences and affronts were mutually forgiven: and to cement the union, a marriage was concluded between Antony and Octavia, the sister of Augustus. A new division of the Roman empire was made between them; Augustus was to have the command in the West; Antony in the East; while Lepidus was obliged to

to content himself with the provinces in Africa. As for Sextus Pompeius, he was permited to retain all the islands he already possessed, together with Peloponnesus. It was likewise stipulated to leave the sea open, and pay the people what corn was due out of Sicily.

The calm occasioned by this compromise. continued for some time. Anthony led his forces against the Parthians; over whom his lieutenant, Ventidius, had gained some advantages. Augustus drew the greatest part of his army into Gaul, where were some disturbances; and Pompey went to attach his newly-ceded province to his interest. It was in this quarter, however, that fresh motives were given for renewing the war. Antony, who was obliged by treaty to quit Peloponnesus, refused to evacuate it till Pompey had satisfied him for such debts as were due to him from the inhabitants. Pompey, rejecting this proposal with disdain, immediately fitted out a new fleet, and renewed his former enterprises, cutting off the corn and provisons that were consigned to Italy. Thus the grievances of the poor were renewed: and the people began to complain, that, instead of three tyrants, they were now oppressed by four.

In this exigence, Augustus, who had long meditated the best means of diminishing the number, resolved to begin by getting rid of Pompey. His first attemptwas to invade Sicily; but his fleet being overpowered in his passage by Pompey, and afterwards shattered in a storm, he was obliged to postpone his designs to the ensuing year. During this interval, he was reinf rced by a noble fleet of one hundred ond twenty ships, by Antony, with which he resolved once more to invade

Sicily on three several quarters. But fortune seemed still determined to oppose him; he was a second time disabled by a storm; which so raised the vanity of Pompey, that he began to style himself the son of Neptune. Augustus, however, having speedily refitted his navy, and recruited his forces, gave the command of both to Agrippa, his faithful friend and associate in war. Agrippa proved himself worthy of the trust reposed in him; and soon gave his adversary a complete and final overthrow. Thus undone, Pompey resolved to fly to Antony, from whom he expected refuge for past services. However, a gleam of hope offering, he tried once more, at the head of a small body of men, to make himself independent, and even surprised Antony's lieutenants, who had been sent to accept his submissions: but being at last abandoned by his soldiers, and delivered up, he was put to death; and in him ended the male offspring of Pompey the Great.

A. C. 31, U. C. 717.

This removed one very powerful obstacle to the ambition of Augustus, and stimulated him to hasten the destruction of the rest of his associates. Lepidus soon furnished a sufficient pretext for depriving him of his share in the triumvirate. Being now at the head of twenty-two legions, with a strong body of cavalry, he vainly supposed that his present power was more than an equivalent to the popularity of Augustus; and in consequence, resolved upon adding Sicily to his province, to which he laid claim, as having first invaded it. Augustus sent to expostulate upon these proceedings; but Lepidus fiercely replied, "That he

"was

"was determined to have his share in the administration, and would no longer allow any one to engross all the authority." Augustus being previously informed of the disposition of Lepidus's soldiers, with great boldness, went alone to his camp, and with no other assistance than private bounties, and the authority he had gained by his former victories, resolved to depose his rival. The soldiers thronged round him with the most dutiful alacrity, while Lepidus exerted himself to prevent their defection. But Augustus, though he received a wound from one of the centurions, flew, with great presence of mind, to the place where the military ensigns were planted, and flourishing one of them in the air, all the legionary soldiers ran in crowds, and saluted him as their general. Lepidus, thus abandoned by his men, divested himself of the badges of his authority; and submissively threw himself at the feet of Augustus. The heir of Cæsar despised his colleague too much to take his life, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the army; but deprived him of all his former power, and banished him to Circæum. There he remained the rest of his life, a melancholy instance of disappointed ambition.

Augustus was received, upon his return to Rome, with universal joy; the senators met him at the gates, and conducted him to the capitol; and, when he had there returned thanks to the gods, the people crowned with garlands of flowers, waited upon him to his palace. Antony now alone remained to prevent his attainment of sovereign and undivided power; and his character and conduct greatly facilitated the designs which his ambitious rival conceived against him. His

 military

military reputation, which had alone supported him, began to be lost, and he seemed to live only to pleasure. Regardless of the business of the state, he spent whole days and nights in the company of Cleopatra, who studied every art to increase his passion, and vary his entertainments. Few women have been so much celebrated for the art of giving novelty to pleasure, and making trifles important: ingenious in filling up the pauses of sensual delight, she assumed every character, and always presented something novel and captivating. Antony was so much fascinated by her wiles, that he was resolved to enlarge her sphere of luxury, by granting her many of those kingdoms which belonged to the Roman empire. He gave her all Phœnicia, Cœlo-Syria and Cyprus, with a great part of Cilicia, Arabia, and Judea;—gifts which he had no right to bestow, but which he pretended to grant in imitation of Hercules. This complication of vice and folly at last totally exasperated the Romans, while Augustus, with a malicious ingenuity, took care to exaggerate all his defects. At length, finding the people sufficiently irritated against him, he resolved to send Octavia, who was then at Rome, to Antony, as if with a view of reclaiming her husband; but in fact, to furnish a sufficient pretext of declaring war against him, as he expected she would be dismissed with contempt.

Antony was now at the city of Leucopolis, revelling with his infamous paramour, when he heard that Octavia had reached Athens, upon her journey to visit him. On this occasion, Cleopatra played off all her arts, and wrought so effectually on the passions of her lover, that he

he ordered his wife to return home, without deigning to see her. He even proceeded to repudiate her, and to marry Cleopatra. Accordingly, he assembled the people of Alexandria in the public theatre, where under an alcove of silver, were placed two thrones of gold, one for himself and the other for the queen. There he seated himself, dressed like Bacchus, while Cleopatra sate beside him clothed in the ornaments and attributes of Isis, the principal deity of the Egyptians. Having declared her queen of all the countries which he had already bestowed upon her, he associated Cæsario, her son by Cæsar, as a partner in the government; and to the two children, which he had by her himself, he gave the title of King of Kings, with very extensive dominions. One folly is generally the parent of many more. New luxuries and pageantries were studied, and new modes of profusion found out: no less than sixty thousand pounds of our money was lavished upon one single entertainment; and it is said, that upon this occasion, that Cleopatra dissolved a pearl of great value in vinegar, and drank it off. Yet amidst all this voluptuous profusion, they were neither of them happy. Antony, we are told, was in constant apprehension of being poisoned, and Cleopatra of being forsaken.

The insult offered to his sister, Augustus eagerly embraced, as a sufficient provocation for declaring war against Antony; and avowed his intentions to the senate. Preparations were accordingly made on both sides, and some attempts at negociation took place; but they terminated in increased animosity. Antony at last commenced hostile movements, by ordering

Canidius, who commanded his army, to march without delay into Europe; while he and Cleopatra followed to Samos, to prepare for carrying on the war with vigour; but his conduct was a ridiculous mixture of inconsistencies. On one side, all the kings and princes from Egypt to the Euxine sea had orders to send himt hither supplies both of men, provisons, and arms; on the other side, all the comedians, dancers, buffoons, and musicians of Greece, were likewise enjoined to attend him. Thus, frequently when a ship was thought to arrive, laden with soldiers, arms, and ammunition, it was found only filled with players and theatrical machinery. In this manner he laboured to unite incompatible pursuits: the kings who attended him endeavoured to gain his favour more by their entertainments than their warlike preparations; the provinces strove rather to please him by sacrificing to his divinity than by their alacrity in his defence; so that some were heard to say, "What rejoicings "would not this man make for a victory, "when he thus triumphs at the eve of a "dangerous war!" In short, his best friends now began to forsake his interest, and to give him up for lost.

His delay at Samos, and afterwards at Athens, was extremely favourable to the arms of Augustus. Had Antony immediately proceeded into Italy, the event might have been doubtful; but he gave his opponent leisure to make ample and deliberate preparations for war, which was afterwards declared in form. Meanwhile, Antony's followers were invited over to join Augustus, with great promises of rewards; but, out of policy, they were not yet declared enemies:

At

At length, both sides thought themselves in readiness to begin the war, with armies suitable to the greatness of the empire they contended for. The one was followed by all the forces of the east; the other drew after him all the strength of the west. Antony's force composed a body of a hundred thousand foot, and twelve thousand horse; while his fleet amounted to five hundred ships of war. The army of Augustus mustered but eighty thousand foot, but equalled his adversary's in the number of cavalry; while his fleet was only half as numerous as Antony's: but the ships were better built, and better manned.

A naval battle, fought near Actium, a city of Epirus, at the entrance of the gulf of Ambracia, decided the fate of the Roman world, and threw it under a single despot. Antony ranged his ships before the mouth of the gulf; and Augustus drew up his fleet in opposition. Neither general assumed any fixed station to command in, but went about from ship to ship, wherever his presence was necessary. In the mean time, the two land armies, on opposite sides of the gulf, were drawn up, only as spectators of the engagement, and encouraged the respective fleets, by their shouts. The battle began on both sides, with great ardour, and after a new mode. The prows of their vessels were armed with brazen points; and with these they drove furiously against each other. In this conflict the ships of Antony came with greater force, but those of Augustus avoided the shock with greater dexterity. On Antony's side the sterns of the ships were raised in the form of a tower; from which the mariners

A.C. 29.

threw arrows from machines for that purpose. Those of Augustus, made use of long poles, hooked with iron, and fire-pots. They fought in this manner, for some time, with equal animosity; but with little advantage on either side. But all of a sudden, Cleopatra determined the fortune of the day. She was seen fleeing from the engagement, attended by sixty sail; struck, perhaps, with the terrors natural to her sex: but what increased the general amazement, was, to behold Antony himself following soon after, and leaving his fleet to the mercy of his opponent. The engagement, notwithstanding, continued with great obstinacy till five in the evening; when Antony's forces, partly constrained by the conduct of Agrippa, and partly persuaded by the promises of Augustus, submitted to the conqueror. The land forces soon after followed the example of the navy; and all submitted to the victor without striking a blow, the fourth day after the battle.

When Cleopatra fled, the infatuated Antony pursued her in a five-oared gally; and, coming along-side of her ship, entered it without seeing, or being seen by her. For three whole days he continued in silent reflection, during which, either through indignation or shame, he neither saw nor spoke to Cleopatra. At last, the queen's female attendants reconciled them, and love became triumphant. Not suspecting the defection of his army, he now dispatched orders to his lieutenant Canidius, to conduct it into Asia. However, he was soon undeceived when he arrived in Africa, where he was informed of their submission to his rival. This account so transported him with rage, that he was with difficulty

ficulty prevented from killing himself; but at length, at the entreaty of his friends, he returned to Alexandria in shame and dismay. Cleopatra. however, seemed to retain that fortitude in her misfortunes, which had utterly abandoned her admirer. Having amassed considerable riches, by confiscations, and other acts of violence, she formed the singular and romantic project, of conveying her whole fleet over the isthmus of Suez into the Red Sea, and of finding an asylum in another region beyond the reach of Rome. Some of the vessels were actually transported thither, pursuant to her orders: but the Arabians having burned them, and Antony dissuading her from the design, she abandoned it for the more improbable scheme of defending Egypt againt the conqueror; or of obtaining better terms, from her show of resistance. It is even believed that she would have saved herself at the expence of Antony; and that she was not yet without some hopes from the power of her charms, though she had arrived almost at the age of forty. Those arts which had been so successful with the greatest men of Rome, it seems, she was desirous of practising on Augustus. In three embassies which were sent one after another, from Antony to Augustus in Asia, the queen had always her secret agents, charged with particular proposals in her name. Antony was so humbled, that he desired no more than that his life might be spared, and to have the liberty of passing the remainder of his days in obscurity. To these proposals Augustus made no reply. Cleopatra sent him also public proposals in favour of her children; but at the

same

same time privately resigned him her crown. To the queen's public proposal, no answer was given; to her private offer he replied, by giving her assurances of his favour, in case she sent away Antony, or put him to death. These negociations could not be kept from the knowledge of Antony, whose jealousy and rage every occurrence now contributed to heighten. He built a small solitary house upon a mole in the sea, and there shut himself up, shunning all commerce with mankind, and professing to imitate Timon the man-hater. But, his furious jealousy drove him again into society; for hearing that Cleopatra had many secret conferences with Thyrsus, an emissary from Augustus, he seized him, and having ordered him to be cruelly scourged, sent him back to his patron. At the same time, he sent letters by him, importing that he had chastised Thyrsus for insulting a man in misfortues: but withal, he gave Augustus permission to avenge himself, by scourging in the same manner, Hipparchus, Antony's freedman, who had abandoned his master's fortune.

Meanwhile, the operations of the war were conducted with great spirit, and Egypt was once more the theatre of the contending armies of Rome. Gallus, the lieutenant of Augustus, took Paretonium, which opened the whole country to his incursions. On the other side, Antony, who had still considerable forces by sea and land, endeavoured to recover that important place from the enemy, by appealing to the legions he had once commanded. In these hopes, he approached, and exhorted them to remember their former vows of fidelity: but Gallus ordered all

all the trumpets to sound, in order to hinder Antony from being heard; so that he was obliged to retire.

Augustus himself was in the mean time advancing with another army before Pelusium, which the governor of the city, either wanting courage to defend, or previously instructed by Cleopatra to give it up, permitted him to take possession of, without resistance; so that Augustus having now no obstacle in his way to Alexandria, marched thither with all expedition. Antony, upon his arrival, sallied out to oppose him, fighting with great desperation, and putting the enemy's cavalry to flight. This slight advantage revived his declining hopes; and, he determined to make a resolute and final effort both by sea and land; but previously offered to fight his adversary in single combat. Augustus too well knew the inequality of their situations, to comply with the offer; he, therefore, coolly replied, that Antony had ways enough to die, beside single combat.

The evening before the day appointed for this last desperate attempt, he ordered a grand entertainment to be prepared. "Give me good wine, "and good cheer," cried he to his friends; "let "me live to-day: to-morrow, perhaps, you "may serve another master." At day-break, Antony posted the few troops he had remaining, upon a rising ground near the city; thence he sent orders to his galleys to engage the enemy. There he waited to be a spectator of the combat; and at first he had the satisfaction to see them advance in good order. But, his joy was soon turned into rage, when he saw his ships only

only saluting those of Augustus, and both fleets uniting together, and sailing back into the harbour; and, at the same instant, his cavalry also deserted him. He tried, however, to lead on his infantry; which were easily vanquished; and he himself compelled to return into the town. His rage was now ungovernable; he could not help crying out in agony as he passed, that he was betrayed by Cleopatra: and in fact these suspicions were just, for it was by secret orders from the queen, that the fleet had passed over to Augustus.

Cleopatra had, for a long while, dreaded the effects of Antony's jealousy; and had, some time before, prepared a method of obviating any sudden sallies it might produce. Near the temple of Isis she erected a building, which was seemingly designed for a sepulchre. Hither she removed all her treasure, and most valuable effects, covering them over with torches, faggots, and other combustible matter. This sepulchre she designed to answer a double purpose; —as well to screen her from the sudden resentment of Antony, as to make Augustus believe that she would burn all her treasures, in case he refused her proper terms of capitulation. Here, therefore, she retired from Antony's present fury; shutting the gates, which were fortified with bolts and bars of iron; but in the mean time gave orders that a report should be spread of her death. This news, which soon reached Antony, recalled all his former love and tenderness. He lamented her death with the same violence with which he had but a few minutes before seemed to desire it. "Wretched man," exclaimed he, "what is there now worth living for; since all "that

"that could soothe or soften my cares is departed! O Cleopatra, our separation does not so much afflict me, as the disgrace I suffer, in permitting a woman to instruct me in the ways of dying." He then called to one of his freedmen named Eros, whom he had engaged by oath to kill him, whenever fortune should drive him to this last resource. Erros being commanded to perform his promise; this faithful follower drew the sword, as if to execute his orders; but turning his face, plunged it into his own bosom, and died at his master's feet. Antony, for a while, hung over his faithful servant, in silent agony; then taking up the sword, stabbed himself in the belly, and fell backward on a couch.

Though the wound was mortal, yet it did not immediately deprive him of life; and he conjured his attendants to finish what he had begun: but they all fled in horror and affright. He therefore continued for some time, crying out and writhing with pain, till he was informed, by one of the queen's secretaries that his mistress was still alive. He then earnestly desired to be carried to the place where she was. They accordingly brought him to the gate of the sepulchre; but Cleopatra, who would not permit it to be opened, appeared at the window, and threw down cords, to pull him up. In this manner, assisted by her two female attendants, she raised him all bloody from the ground; and while yet suspended in the air, he continued stretching out his hands to encourage her. Having effected their purpose, they carried him to a couch, on which they gently laid him. Cleopatra now gave way to her sorrow, tearing her clothes,

clothes, beating her breast, and kissing the wound of which he was dying. She called him her lord, her husband, her emperor, and seemed to have forgotten her own distresses, in the greatness of his sufferings. Antony entreated her to moderate the transports of her grief, and asked for some wine. After he had drunk, he entreated Cleopatra to endeavour to preserve her life, if she could do it with honour; and recommended Proculeius, a friend of Augustus, as one she might rely on, to be her intercesssor. He exhorted her not to lament for his misfortunes, but to congratulate him upon his former felicity; to consider him as one who had lived the most powerful of men, and at last died a Roman death. Soon after he had done speaking, he expired. Proculeius now made his appearance by command of Augustus, who had been informed of Antony's desperate conduct. Cleopatra, however, was upon her guard, and would not confer with Proculeius, except through the gate, which was very well secured. But, having amused her by an appearance of retiring, while one of his fellow-soldiers kept her in conversation; he entered with two more, by the window at which Antony had been drawn up, and immediately ran down to the gate. On this, one of the women crying out, that they were taken alive, Cleopatra drew a poniard, and attempted to stab herself. Proculeius, preventing the blow, gently remonstrated on her cruelty, in refusing so good a prince as his master was, the pleasure of displaying his clemency. He then forced the poniard out of her hand, and leaving every thing secured, went to acquaint Augustus with what he had done.

Augustus

Augustus was extremely pleased at finding Cleopatra in his power: he sent Epaphroditus to bring her to his palace, and to watch over her with the utmost circumspection; at the same time enjoining him to treat her with the respect due to her rank. But nothing could reconcile her to captivity; and her aggravated ills produced a fever, which she seemed willing to increase. She resolved to abstain from taking nourishment, under the pretence of a regimen necessary for her disorder; but Augustus, being made acquainted with the real motive, began to threaten her, with regard to her children, in case she should persist. This was the only punishment that could now affect her; and therefore she received whatever was prescribed for her recovery.

In the mean time, Augustus made his entry into Alexandria; taking care to mitigate the fears of the inhabitants, by conversing familiarly as he went along with Areus, the philosopher, a native of the place. The citizens, however, trembled at his approach; and when he placed himself upon the tribunal, they prostrated themselves, with their faces to the ground, before him. Augustus presently ordered them to rise, telling them, that he was induced to pardon them, out of respect for Alexander, who was the founder of their city; his admiration of its beauty; and his friendship for Areus, their fellow-citizen. Two only of particular note were put to death upon this occasion; Antony's eldest son Antyllus, and Cæsario, the son of Julius Cæsar, both betrayed into his hands by their respective tutors, who themselves soon after justly suffered for their perfidy. The rest of

Cleopatra's children were treated with great indulgence, and as their mother was recovered from her late indisposition, he came to visit her in person. She received him lying on a couch, in a careless manner; and upon his entering the apartment, rose up to prostrate herself before him. She was dressed in nothing but a loose robe; her hair was dishevelled, her voice trembling, her complexion pale, and her eyes red with weeping. Yet still her natural beauty seemed to gleam through the distresses that surrounded her; and the graces of her motion, and the alluring softness of her looks, still bore testimony to the former power of her charms. Augustus raised her with his usual complaisance, and desiring her to sit, placed himself beside her. Cleopatra had been prepared for this interview, and made use of every method she could think of, to propitiate the conqueror. She alternately employed apologies, entreaties, and allurements to obtain his favour, and soften his resentment. She talked of Cæsar's humanity to those in distress; she read some of his letters to her, full of tenderness; and enlarged upon the long intimacy that had passed between them. "But of what service," cried she, are now all "his benefits to me! Why could I not die with "him! Yet he still lives—methinks I see him "still before me—he revives in you."

To her arguments, her importunity, and her solicitations, Augustus answered with a cold indifference, scarcely venturing to meet her eyes; but when she intimated, as he supposed, a desire of life, he was highly pleased, and assured her, that she should be indulged to the height of her expectations. He then took leave and departed;

imagining

imagining he had reconciled her to life, and that he should have the glory of leading her as a captive in his triumph on his return to Rome: but in this he was deceived. Cleopatra, all the while, had kept a correspondence with Dolabella, a young Roman of high birth, in the camp of Augustus; who seems to have felt deeply for her misfortunes. From him she learnt the intentions of Augustus, and that he was determined to send her off in three days, together with her children to Rome. She now saw what was intended for her, and determined on death; but previously intreated permission to pay her last oblations at Antony's tomb. This request being granted her, she crowned the tomb with garlands of flowers; and having kissed the coffin a thousand times, returned home to execute her fatal resolution. She attired herself in the most splendid manner; then feasted as usual; and soon after ordered all but her two attendants, Charmion and Iris, to leave the room. Having previously ordered an asp to be secretly conveyed to her in a basket of fruit, she sent a letter to Augustus, informing him of her fatal purpose, and desiring to be buried in the same tomb with Antony. Augustus, upon receiving this letter, instantly dispatched messengers to prevent her design, but they arrived too late. Upon entering the chamber, they beheld Cleopatra lying dead upon a gilded couch, arrayed in her royal robes. Near her, Iris, one of her faithful attendants, was stretched lifeless at the feet of her mistress; and Charmion herself, almost expiring, was settling the diadem upon Cleopatra's head. "Alas!" cried one of the messengers, "was this well done, Char-

 "mion?

"mion?"—"Yes," replied she, "it is well done; "such a death becomes a queen, descended from "a long line of glorious ancestors." On pronouncing these words, she fell down dead by the side of her beloved mistress.

There are some circumstances in the death of Clopatra, that interests our affections, contrary to the dictates of our reason. She died at the age of thirty-nine, after having reigned twenty-two years; and with her ended the monarchy of Egypt.

Augustus was much chagrined at being thus deprived of a principal ornament in his intended triumph. However, her dying request was complied with; her body being laid by Antony's, and a magnificent funeral prepared for her and her two faithful attendants.

Augustus, now complete master of the Roman empire, returned to Rome in triumph: where, by sumptuous feasts, and magnificent shows, he began to obliterate the impressions of his former cruelty; and from this time resolved to secure by his clemency, a throne, the foundations of which were laid in blood. He was now at the head of the most extensive empire that mankind had ever beheld. It contained in Europe—Italy, Gaul, Spain, Greece, Illyricum, Dacia, Pannonia, Britain, and some part of Germany:—In Asia, all those provinces which went under the name of Asia Minor; together with Armenia, Syria, Judæa, Mesopotamia, and Media:—In Africa, almost all those parts of it which were then supposed habitable; namely, Egypt, Numidia, Mauritania, and Lybia: the whole comprising an extent of between three and four thousand miles

miles in length, and half as much in breadth. As to the yearly revenues of the empire, they have been computed to be about forty millions of our money. The number of the citizens of Rome* at this period, amounted to four millions and sixty-three thousand men, women, and children; and though they had lost their original character of a fierce spirit of independence, they had certainly gained other qualities that tend to render life agreeable, and manners amiable. In polite learning they had now made a proficiency which has never since been excelled. Beside Virgil, Horace, and Ovid, poets whose names it is sufficient to mention, Livy, the historian, as the actions he undertook to record were greater. In short, the glories of the Augustan age reflect a lustre on human nature itself; and the illustrious authors it produced, we forget the vices of the government and the depravity of individuals.

* In Rome, Italy, and the Provinces.

CHAP XIV.

From the Settlement of the Roman Empire under Augustus, to the Death of Tiberius.

A. C. 27. U. C. 721. FROM this period the government of Rome took a permanent form, and in consequence fewer occurrencies presented themselves for the historian to narrate. Commotions, and wars, and political intrigues, are indeed, the chief materials of history; and during those intervals in which mankind have known most happiness, there is little that deserves to be recorded. Like a level plain, the smooth tenor of life exhibits nothing to arrest attention.

The reign of Augustus was most propitious to Rome. From the moment he wanted a rival, he gave up his cruelty; and being entirely without an opposer, he seemed totally divested of suspicion. By the most masterly strokes of policy, he united all interests and reconciled all differences; and in order to lessen envy and procure favour, he took care to disguise his new despotism under names familiar, and allowed by the constitution he had destroyed. He claimed to himself the title of Emperor, to preserve authority over the army; he caused himself to be created Tribune, to manage the people; and Prince of the Senate, to govern there. Thus uniting in his own person so many different powers, he was also burthened with the cares

belonging

belonging to each separate department; and while he did the greatest good to others, fully gratified his ambition in the discharge of his duty. In this manner the people's interests and his ambition seemed to co-operate; and while he governed all, he allowed them to indulge the idea that they were governing themselves.

For this purpose, as he had gained the empire by his army, he resolved to govern it by the senate; which, though greatly fallen from its ancient splendour, he knew to be the most capable of wisdom and justice. To these, therefore, he committed the chief power in the administration of his government, while he still kept the people and the army stedfast to him by donatives, and acts of favour. By these means, all the odium of justice fell upon the senate, and all the popularity of pardon was solely his own.

After having established this admirable order, Augustus found himself agitated by different passions; and considered a long time, whether he should keep the empire or restore the people to their ancient liberty. The examples of Sylla and Cæsar variously operated upon him. He reflected that Sylla, who had voluntarily quitted the dictatorship, died peaceably in the midst of his enemies; while Cæsar, who had kept it, was assasinated by his most intimate friends. Under these impressions, he discovered the disorder of his mind to his two principal friends, Agrippa and Mecænas. Agrippa, who had assisted in gaining the empire by his valour, advised him to resign it; but Mecænas, was of a contrary opinion. This minister, who has acquired so much glory by his patronage of litera-

ture,

ture, was more an admirer of the useful than the splendid virtues, and was better satisfied with what only smoothed their vanity, or flattered them with an empty name. He therefore, intreated Augustus to consider the advantage of his country; he described the empire as too great and unwieldy to subsist without the most vigorous master, and likely to fall into pieces, if under a variety of rulers. To these he added a dissuasive, perhaps still more prevailing; namely, the safety of the emperor, which nothing but his present authority could secure. These reasons prevailled with Augustus, who seems to have been well inclined to preserve that power which he had so hardly laboured to obtain, and who, in all probability had only been sounding the disposition of his friends. From that time, Augustus adopted the advice of Mecænas, not only in this instance, but on every other occasion. By the instructions of that great minister, he became gentle, affable, and humane. By his advice it was, that he formed a resolution of never being concerned at what was said against him; but at the same time he took care to encourage men of learning, and to cultivate their friendship, who in their turn relieved his most anxious hours, and circulated his praise through the empire.

Augustus being now convinced of the attachment of all orders of the state to his person, determined to impress the people with an idea of his magnanimity, in pretending a wish to relinquish the sovereign power. The consequence was, that all unanimously besought him to continue the government with which he complied, apparently

apparently reluctant, but no doubt with real pleasure. The senate, indeed, was so gratified with this show of moderation on one hand, and acquiescence on the other, that they ordered the pay of his guard to be doubled, and heaped new honours upon him. Still, however, he assumed the government for no longer a period than ten years; but managed so well, that his power was constantly renewed. It was now that the surname of Augustus was legitimately bestowed on him, while he was confirmed in the title of father of his country, and his person declared sacred and inviolable. In short, flattery seemed on the rack to find out new modes of pleasing him. But though he despised the arts of the senate, he permitted their homage; well knowing that, among mankind, titles produce a respect which enforces authority.

Upon his entering into his tenth consulship, the senate, by oath, approved all his acts, and set him wholly above the power of the laws. They even offered to swear to the observance of not only all the laws he had made, but such as he should make for the future; in short, he exercised the most unlimited power over the people, without their seeming to feel or to know it. A.C. 23.

The accumulation of titles and employments, which appeared to have devolved on Augustus rather than to have been assumed by him, did not in the least diminish his assiduity in filling the duties of each. Several very wholesome edicts were issued by his command, tending to suppress corruption in the senate, and licentiousness in the people. He ordained that none should exhibit a show of gladiators without orders from the senate, and then

then no oftener than twice a year; nor with more than an hundred and twenty at a time. This law was extremely necessary at so corrupt a period of the empire; when whole armies of these unfortunate men were brought at once upon the stage, and compelled to fight, often till half of them were slain. It had been usual also with the knights, and some women of the first distinction, to exhibit themselves as dancers upon the theatre; he ordered that not only they, but their children and grandchildren, should be restrained from such exercises for the future. He fined many who had refused to marry at a certain age; and rewarded such as had several children. He ordered that virgins should not be married till twelve years of age; and permitted any person to kill an adulterer taken in the fact. He enacted that the senators should be always held in great reverence; adding to their outward dignity what he had taken from their real power. He made a law that no man should have the freedom of the city without a previous examination into his merit and character. He appointed new rules and limits to the manumission of slaves, and was himself very strict in the observance of them. With regard to players, of whom he was very fond, he severely examined their morals, not allowing the least licentiousness in their lives, nor indecency in their actions. Though he encouraged the athletic exercises, yet he would not permit women to be present at them; holding it to be unbecoming the modesty of the sex. In order to prevent bribery in suing for offices, he took considerable sums of money from the candidates, by way of pledge; and if any

any indirect practices were proved against them, they were obliged to forfeit all. Slaves had been hitherto disallowed to confess any thing against their own masters; but he abolished the practice; directing the slave to be first sold to another, and his examination against his last master to be, then, free. These, and many other laws, all tending to extirpate vice, or deter from crimes, gave the manners of the people another complexion; so that the rough character of the Roman was now softened into refinement.

His own example tended a good deal to humanize his fellow citizens. Being placed above all equality, he had nothing to fear from condescension; hence he was familiar with all, and suffered himself to be reprimanded with the most patient humility. Though he was, by the single authority of his station, capable of condemning or acquitting whomsoever he thought proper; yet he gave the laws their proper course; and even sometimes condescended to plead for those he desired to protect. One of his veteran soldiers having entreated his protection in a lawsuit, and Augustus, taking little notice of his request, desired him to apply to an advocate—"Ah!" replied the soldier, "it was not by "proxy that I served you at the battle of Actium." This reply pleased Augustus so much, that he pleaded his cause in person, and gained it for him. He was so affable, that he returned the salutations of the meanest person. One day a person presented him with a petition, but with so much awe, that Augustus was displeased with his meanness: "What friend," cried he, "you "seem as if you were offering something to an "elephant, and not to a man:—be bolder." One day,

day, as he was sitting on the tribunal, in judgment, Mecænas perceiving by his temper that he was inclined to be severe, attempted to speak to him: but not being able to approach him for the crowd, he threw a paper into his lap, on which was written, "Arise, executioner." Augustus read it, without displeasure, and immediately rising, pardoned those whom he was disposed to condemn. But, what most of all shewed his acquired greatness of mind, was his treatment of Cornelius Cinna, Pompey's grandson. This nobleman had entered into a very dangerous conspiracy against him: but the plot was discovered before it was ripe for execution. Augustus, for some time, debated with himself how to act; but at last his clemency prevailed; he therefore sent for those who were guilty, and after reprimanding them, dismissed them, without any other punishment. But in order to mortify Cinna, he thus addressed him in particular, "I "have twice given you your life; first, as an "enemy; now, as a conspirator: I now give you "the consulship: let us, therefore, be friends for "the future; and let us only contend in shewing, "whether my confidence, or your fidelity, shall "be victorious." This generosity, which the emperor very happily timed, had so good an effect, that from that instant, conspiracies ceased to be formed against him.

During a long reign of forty years, Augustus seemed to find his own happiness in that of his people, and to study to preserve them in peace. The wars which were carried on in the distant provinces rather aimed at enforcing submission than at extending dominion; for he had made it a rule to carry on no operations in which ambition, and not the safety of the state, was concerned.

Nevertheless,

Nevertheless, the Roman arms, under his lieutenants, were still generally crowned with success. The Cantabrians in Spain, who had revolted, were more than once quelled by Tiberius his step-son, Agrippa his son-in-law, and Ælius Lamia. The Germans also, who had made repeated excursions into the territories of Gaul, were repressed by Lollius. The Rhetians were conquered by Drusus the brother of Tiberius; and the Bessi and Silatæ, barbarous nations, making an irruption into Thrace, were overthrown by Piso. The Dacians were repressed with more than one defeat: the Armenians also were brought into due subjection by Caius his grandson. The Getulians, in Africa, took up arms; but were subdued by the consul, Caius Cossus, who thence received the surname of Getulicus. A dangerous war was also carried on against the Dalmatians and Pannonians; who, having collected an army of two hundred thousand foot, and nine thousand horse, threatened Rome itself with destruction. Levies were therefore made in Italy with the utmost expedition; the veteran troops were recalled from all parts; and Augustus went to Ariminum, for the greater convenience of giving his directions. This war continued near three years; being principally managed by Tiberius and Germanicus; the latter of whom gained great reputation against these fierce and barbarous invaders. Upon their reduction, Bato, their leader, being summoned before the tribunal of Tiberius, and being asked how he could dare to revolt against the power of Rome? the bold barbarian replied, "that the Romans, and not he, were the aggressors; since they had sent, instead of

dogs

dogs and shepherds to secure their flocks, only wolves and bears to devour them." But the war which was most fatal to the Roman interests, during this reign, was that which was managed by Quintilius Varus. This general invading the territories of the Germans, was induced to follow the enemy among their forests and marshes, with his army in detachments; when he was entirely cut off, with his whole army, composed of the choicest troops of the empire. The affliction, from this defeat, seemed to sink very deep upon the mind of Augustus: he was often heard to cry out, in a tone of anguish, "Quin-"tilius Varus, restore me my legions!" But amidst the love of his people, and a great share of public prosperity, Augustus was not exempt from ills of a domestic nature*. He had married Livia, the wife of Tiberius Nero, by the consent of her husband, at a time when she was six months gone with child. Being an imperious woman, and conscious of being beloved, she controlled him ever after at her pleasure. She had two sons by her former husband; Tiberius, the elder, whom she greatly loved; and Drusus, who was born three months after she had been married to Augustus, and who was thought to be his own son. The eldest of these, Tiberius, whom he afterwards adopted, and who succeeded him in the empire, was a good general, but of a suspicious and obstinate temper; so that though he was serviceable to Augustus in his foreign wars, yet he often disturbed his quiet at home.

* Augustus was often heard to exclaim, "How happy "should I have been, had I never had a wife nor children!"

Drusus,

Drusus*, the other son of Livia, died in his return from an expedition against the Germans, leaving Augustus inconsolable for his loss. But his greatest affliciton was, the conduct of his daughter Julia, whom he had by Scribonia, his former wife. This woman, whom he had first married to his nephew Marcellus, then to his general Agrippa, and after both their deaths to Tiberius, set no bounds to her lewdness: the very court where her father presided, was not exempt from her debaucheries. He, at first, thought of putting her to death; but, after some consideration, he banished her to Pandataria, commanding that no person should come near her, without his own permission; but he permitted her mother Scribonia to bear her company. Afterwards, whenever any attempted to intercede for Julia, his answer was, "that fire and water should sooner unite, than he with her." However, she had two sons by Agrippa, named Caius and Lucius, from whom great expectations were formed; but they died when scarcely arrived at man's estate. Thus Augustus, having in a great measure survived all his nearest relations, at length in the seventy-fourth year of his age, began to think of retiring, in good earnest, from the fatigues of state; and therefore constituted Tiberius his successor, in the usual employments. However, he could not entirely forsake the administration of the state, which habit had mixed with his satisfactions; but still continued a watchful guardian of its interests, and shewed himself to the last a lover of his people.

A. C. 9, U. C. 739.

A. C. 2.

* It has been supposed that he was taken off by poison, lest he shuld have supplanted Tiberius.

Soon after, Augustus seems to have been apprehensive of his approaching end; for, he made his will, and delivered it to the vestal virgins. He then solemnized the census, and found the number of the citizens to be four millions one hundred and thirty-seven thousand. While these ceremonies were performed in the Campus Martius, it is said, that an eagle flew round the emperor several times, and directing its flight to a neighbouring temple, perched over the name of Agrippa; which was by the augurs conceived to portend the death of the emperor. Shortly after, having accompanied Tiberius in his march into Illyria, as far as Beneventum, he was there taken ill of a diarrhœa. Returning thence, he came to Nola, near Capua; and finding himself dangerously ill, he sent for Tiberius, with the rest of his most intimate friends and acquaintance. He did not continue long to indulge vain hopes of recovery; but convinced that his end was at hand, patiently awaited its arrival. A few hours before his death, he ordered a looking-glass to be brought, and his hair to be adjusted with more than usual care. He then addressed his friends, whom he beheld surrounding his bed, and desired to know, whether he had properly played his part in life; to which being answered in the affirmative, he cried out with his last breath, "Then "give me your applause;" and thus, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, after reigning forty-one, he expired in the arms of Livia, bidding her remember their marriage, and farewel.

A. D. [illegible]

The death of the emperor, when known, caused inexpressible grief throughout the whole Roman empre; and his funeral was performed with great magnificence.

magnificence. These solemn rites being discharged, one of the emperors's freemen publicly read his will in the senate-house, in which he made Tiberius and Livia his heirs; and by that, Livia was likewise adopted into the Julian family, and honoured with the name of Augusta. He gave considerable legacies to many private persons, to the prætorian guards, to the legionary soldiers, and to all the citizens of Rome.

Among his writings were found directions to Tiberius, for governing the empire. From these it appeared to be his opinion, "that no man, how great a favourite soever he might be, should be intrusted with too much authority, lest it should induce him to turn tyrant; and that none should desire to enlarge the empire, which was already preserved with difficulty." Thus he seemed studious of serving his country to the very last, and the sorrow of the people seemed equal to his assiduity. It was decreed, that all the women should mourn for him a whole year. Temples were erected to him; divine honours were allowed him; and one Numericus Atticus, a senator, willing to convert the adulation of the times to his own benefit, received a large sum of money, for swearing that he saw him ascending into heaven.

Such were the honours paid to Augustus, whose power began in the slaughter, and terminated in the happiness of his subjects; so that it was said of him, "that it had been good for mankind, if he had never been born, or had never died." He gave the government an air suited to the disposition of the times; he indulged his subjects in the pride of seeing the appearance of a republic, while he really made them happy in the effects of an absolute

 monarchy,

monarchy, guided by the most consummate prudence. In this last virtue, he seems to have excelled most monarchs; and indeed, could we separate Octavius from Augustus, he would be one of the most faultless princes in history. The long peace which his subjects enjoyed, during his administration, may be ascribed entirely to his moderation; and about the middle of his reign, the greatest part of mankind saw themselves, at once, professing obedience to one monarch, and in perfect harmony with each other. This was the time in which our Saviour, Jesus Christ, came into the world, to make a more ample revelation of the will of God, and give new sanctions to the practice of every human virtue, by his own example. He was born in Judea, in the seven hundred and fifty-second year of Rome, the twenty-fifth of the reign of Augustus, and in the four thousand and third year of the world, according to the common computation.

U. C. 748.

Augustus left his successor in possession of great popularity, and a happy empire; but he immediately found means to injure his popularity, by claiming as a debt, that homage which his predecessor was willing to receive as a favour; and subverted the happiness of the empire, by making a distinction between the welfare of the prince and the people.

A. C. 14. U. C. 762.

The first object of Tiberius's suspicion when he came to the empire, was Agrippa Posthumus, the third and only remaining son of the general of that name, by Julia, daughter of Augustus. This youth having been guilty of meny irregularities, was banished by Augustus into the island of Planasium; and was now murdered by the order of Tiberius;

Tiberius; who pretended that it was done by the particular appointment of the late emperor, in his anxiety for the safety of the succession.

The people in general were now ready to suffer every injury, without murmuring. Every order of the state was ambitious of slavery, and only desirous of shewing the extent of their obedience, by the humility of their adulation. All suits and petitions were made to Tiberius alone; and, at the same time, he took care, with a deep dissimulation, to have it thought that he wished to be exonerated from the toil of attending to so much duty, and that he was induced to undertake it, only in compliance with the desires of the senate, and for the good of the people. In fact, he had acted so long in a fictitious character, being now fifty-six years old, that he had not the resolution, all at once, to shew himself in his native colours. In the beginning of his reign, therefore, nothing appeared but prudence, generosity, and clemency. He utterly rejected many of those great names and titles of honour which were so liberally offered him by the senate. He prohibited their erecting statutes to him but upon certain occasions, and absolutely forbade their worshipping him as a deity. When they offered to swear to obey all the ordinances which at any time he might enact, he checked their vile adulation; by observing, "that all sublunary things were mutable and uncertain, and the higher he was raised, his state was only the more exposed to danger." He assumed also an appearance of great patience and moderation upon all occasions; for, having learnt that some persons had spoken ill both of him and his government, he shewed no resentment, but

mildly replied, "that in a free city, the tongues of men ought also to be free."

When some govenors had indicated a mode of increasing his revenues, he, with indignation answered, "that a good shepherd ought to shear, but never flay his flock." He made many sumptuary edicts against taverns, and places of public resort; he punished dishonest matrons, and even prohibited kissing, by way of salutation. He was very vigilant in suppressing robberies and seditions, and caused justice to be duly and regularly administered, throughout every part of Italy. In short, the commencement of his reign was such a tissue of deep-laid deceit, that he made every one the dupe of his affectation of goodness.

The success of Germanicus, however, soon brought his natural dispositions to light, and discovered the malignity of his mind without disguise. He was scarcely well settled on his throne, when he received intelligence that the legions in Pannonia, hearing of the death of Augustus, and desirous of novelty, had revolted; but these were soon quieted, and Percennius, their leader, slain. A commotion in Germany was attended with much more important consequences. The legions in that part of the empire were conducted by Germanicus, the son of Drusus, late brother of Tiberius, a youth of the most admirable qualities, and who had been, at the late emperor's request, adopted, in order to succeed to the empire. The legions under his command had taken the opportunity of his absence to revolt, and now boldly began to affirm that the Roman empire was in their gift, as its principal grandeur was owing to the success of their arms. When Ger-

maniacus

manicus returned, they unanimously resolved to choose him emperor. This general was the darling of the soldiers, and might with very little difficulty have raised himself to the highest dignity in the state. But his duty prevailing over his ambition, he rejected their offers with the utmost indignation, and used the most indefatigable endeavours to quell the sedition, and to prevent its renewal, by leading his forces against the Germans.

Tiberius was as much gratified with the loyalty of Germanicus, as he was distressed at his superior popularity. His success immediately after, against the Germans, whom he overthrew in several battles, excited still more the emperor's envy and private disgust. Among his other atchievements, was not considered as the least honourable, that of recovering the standards which had been taken from the unfortunate Varus, and erecting trophies to the memory of his own army, in those very wilds in which the legions of the former were slain.

All these victories only served to enflame the emperor's jealousy; and every virtue in the general, now became a new cause of offence. Tiberius began by trying to find some plausible pretence of detaching Germanicus from the legions. But he was for a while obliged to postpone his purpose, upon account of a domestic insurrection, raised in Italy by one Clemens, who had been a slave to the young Agrippa that was slain. This adventurer being about the same age, and in person very much resembling his late master, assumed his name, and caused it to be reported in all parts of Italy that Agrippa was still alive. This fiction, idle as it was, had a surprising influence through the

empire

empire, and occasioned many tumults; Clemens himself boldly asserting his claim, and now and then appearing in different parts of the country, when he could do it with safety. Tiberius determined to oppose fraud to imposture; and accordingly two soldiers were employed, who, by pretending an attachment to Clemens, speedily found an opportunity of seizing him. The impostor being brought before Tiberius, the latter sternly demanded how he came to be Agrippa? To which the other as boldly replied, "By the "same arts which you have become Cæsar." Tiberius finding by his resolution, that it was vain to expect any discovery from him of his accomplices, resolved to put him immediately to death; which accordingly was executed in private, under the apprehension of a commotion of the people.

Being freed from this domestic enemy, Tiberius turned his thoughts on the most specious means of effecting the ruin of Germanicus. An invasion of the Parthians afforded him the fairest opportunity. That fierce and unconquerable people having slain two of their own kings, and refused to accept a third, who had been an hostage at Rome, broke the peace which had been ratified in the reign of Augustus, and invaded Armenia, a kingdom tributary to the empire. Tiberius embraced the occasion of recalling Germanicus, and removing him from the command of those legions which were too much devoted to his interest. He began by procuring him a triumph for his victory in Germany; and then writing to him to return, in order to enjoy these honours which the senate had decreed: adding, that he had reaped enough of glory in a country where he had beent sent nine times,

and had been every time victorious. To these specious civilities Germanicus made no direct reply, but earnestly entreated the continuance of his command for one year longer, only to finish the enterprises he had begun. Tiberius, however, was too well skilled in dissimulation to stop here; he made him an offer of the consulship, and requested that he would execute the office in person.

Germanicus, though he probably saw through the emperor's motives, hesitated no longer to obey. As he approached the city, he was met by infinite multitudes, who received him rather with marks of adoration than respect. The gracefulness of his person, his triumphal chariot, in which were carried his five children, and the recovered standards of the army of Varus, threw the people into a phrensy of joy and admiration. Tiberius, though inwardly repining, seemed to join in the general rapture: he gave the people, in the name of Germanicus, three hundred sesterces each man; and the succeeding year, made him his colleague in the consulship. However, his real aim was to send him at a distance from Rome, where his popularity was now become odious to him; and yet, not to give him such a command as could at any time be turned against himself. The Parthian invasion was very convenient for his designs; and, besides, there now offered other pretexts for sending him into Asia. Antiochus, king of Comagena, and Philopater, king of Cilicia, being both dead, some differences arose in those nations to the prejudice of the Romans. At the same time, Syria and Judea, overburthened with taxes, made earnest supplications of redress. These, therefore, appeared to be objects worthy the attention

of

of Germanicus; and, in consequence, all the provinces of Asia were readily decreed to him, with more extensive power than had been granted to any govenor before. But Tiberius, in order to counteract this power, had sent Cneius Piso governor into Syria; with secret instructions to oppose Germanicus upon every occasion; and even to procure his death, if he could without suspicion.

A. D. 18. Germanicus, soon after his appointment, departed from Rome for his eastern expedition, carrying with him his wife Aprippina and his children. In the mean time, Piso, who had preceded him, set about the execution of his commission, and threw every impediment in the way of his success. In a short time, however, Germanicus replaced the king of Armenia, who was a friend to the Romans; reduced Cilicia and Comagena into Roman provinces; and soon after obliged the king of Parthia to sue for peace; which was granted him, much to the advantage and honour of Rome. Notwithstanding all this, Piso did not cease to defame the illustrious general, and openly to censure all his proceedings. These efforts of malice were disregarded; Germanicus opposed only patience and condescension to invective; and, with that gentleness which was peculiar to him, repaid resentment by courtesy. Not ignorant of the motives, he was rather willing to evade than oppose enmity. He took a voyage into Egypt, under a pretence of viewing the celebrated antiquities of that country; but in reality to avoid the machinations of Piso, and those of his wife, Plancina, which it seems were still more dangerous. Upon his return, he suddenly fell sick; and,

and, whether from a mind previously alarmed, or from more certain knowledge of treachery, he sent to let Piso know, that he broke off all further connections and friendship with him. A short interval of convalescence restored the hopes of his friends; and the citizens of Antioch prepared to offer sacrifices for his recovery. But Piso, with his lictors, disturbed their solemnities, and drove off their victims from the foot of the altars. Germanicus relapsing, grew daily worse; and finding his end approaching, he addressed his friends who stood round his bed, to the following effect; "Had my death been natural, I "might have reason to complain of being thus "snatched away from all the endearments of "life, at so early an age; but now my complaints "are aggravated, in falling the victim of Piso "and Plancina's treachery. Let the emperor, "therefore, I conjure you, know the manner of "my death, and the tortures I suffer. Those "who loved me when living, those even who "envied my fortune, will feel some regret, when "they hear of a soldier, who had so often es-"caped the rage of the enemy, falling a sacrifice "to the treachery of a woman. Plead then my "cause before the people; you will be heard "with pity; and if my murderers should pretend "to have acted by command, they will either "receive no credit, or no pardon." As he spoke these words he stretched forth his hand, which his weeping friends tenderly pressing, solemnly vowed, that they would sooner lose their lives than their revenge. The dying prince then turning to his wife, conjured her by his memory, and all the bonds of nuptial love, to submit to the necessity of the times, and to evade the resentment of her more powerful enemies, by not

opposing it. Thus much he said openly; something more was uttered in private; and shortly after he expired.

A.D. 19. Nothing could exceed the distress of the whole empire, upon hearing of the death of Germanicus. But the people of Rome seemed to put no bounds to their grief. A vacation was made in all public and domestic duties; the streets were filled with lamentations; the people cast stones at their temples, and flung down their altars; while new-born infants were exposed, as objects not worthy paternal attention in this universal calamity.

There is little doubt but Germanicus suspected that he was poisoned by the artifices of Piso and Plancina, and the people seem to have entertained the same idea. Even the emperor himself, and his mother Livia, did not wholly escape censure. The distress and indignation which had been thus excited, was however soon after greatly increased by the arrival of Agrippina, the virtuous widow of Germanicus, who appeared bearing the ashes of her husband, and attended by all her children. As she approached the city, she was met by the senate, and the whole body of the people of Rome, with a strange mixture of acclamation and sorrow. The veteran soldiers, many of whom had served under Germanicus, gave the sincerest testimonies of their concern. The whole multitude, while the ashes were depoited in the tomb of Augustus, at first regarded the ceremony in profound silence; but shortly after, all of a sudden, broke out into loud lamentations, crying, that the commonwealth was now no more.

Tiberius, whose jealousy had some reason to

be

be alarmed at this excess of sorrow, used all his art to conceal his chagrin, and made a show of sharing in the general calamity. He even permitted the accusation of Piso, who was supposed to be merely the instrument of his vengeance: but this man, seeing there was no hopes of being screened, either dispatched himself, or was taken off privately in his own house. His wife Plancina, who was universally believed to be most culpable escaped punishment for the present, but at last suffered as she deserved.

About a year after the death of Germanicus, Tiberius took his own son Drusus as a colleague with him in the consulship; and, willing to initiate him into business betimes, left him in the government of the city, while he himself retired, under the pretence of indisposition. About this time, several nations of the Gauls revolted, and made such progress at first, that the fame of their successes spread consternation even as far as Rome. Caius Silius, however, marched with the Roman legions to oppose them; and gained a great and decisive victory. A revolt also happened about this time in Numidia, under Tacfarinas, who had rebelled once before; but he was now, in some measure, brought under by Blæsus; who, in consequence, received the honour of being saluted Imperator.

Hitherto Tiberius had kept within bounds; but being now in the ninth year of his reign, and having no object of jealousy to awe him, he began to pull off the mask entirely, and appear in his natural character. A law at that time subsisted, which made it treason to form any injurious attempt against the majesty of the people, Tiberius assumed to himself the interpretation

and enforcement of this law; and extended it not only to the cases which really affected the safety of the state, but to every conjuncture that could possibly be favourable to his hatred or suspicions. All freedom was consequently banished from convivial meetings; and distrust reigned amongst the nearest relations. The gloomy disposition and insincerity of the prince, were diffused through all ranks of men: friendship had the air of an allurement to betray; a fine genius was but a shining indiscretion; and even virtue itself was considered as an impertinent intruder.

The law of offended majesty being revived, the first of note that fell a sacrifice to it, was Cremutius Cordus, who, in his Annals of the Roman empire, had called Brutus the last of the Romans. This brave man seeing his destruction inevitable, resolved to defeat the malice of the tyrant, and died a voluntary death.

About the commencement of these sanguinary measures, Tiberius took into his confidence Sejanus, a Roman knight, who found out the method of gaining his confidence by the most refined degree of dissimulation, in which he was an overmatch for his master. He was close and subtle in his designs, but bold and aspiring in his attempts; modest to outward appearance, but concealing an ambition that knew no bounds. He was made by the emperor captain of the prætorian guards, one of the most confidential trusts in the state: and extolled in the senate as a worthy associate in his labours. The servile senators, with ready adulation, set up the statues of the favourite beside those of Tiberius, and seemed eager to pay him similar honours. It is not

not well known whether he was the adviser of all the cruelties that ensued after; but certain it is, that from the beginning of his ministry, Tiberius seemed to become more fatally suspicious and more cruel.

So secure was the minister in the favour of Tiberius, that he even ventured to aspire at the throne, and to make the emperor's foolish confidence one of the first steps to his ruin. However, he considered that cutting off Tiberius alone, would rather retard than promote his designs, while his son Drusus, and the children of Germanicus, were yet remaining. He therefore began by corrupting Livia, the wife of Drusus, whom, after having debauched, he prevailed upon to poison her husband. Tiberius bore the loss of his son with great composure; he was even heard to jest upon the occasion; for when the ambassadors from Troy came somewhat late with their compliments of condolence, he answered their pretended distresses, by condoling with them also upon the death of Hector.

A. D. 23.

Sejanus having succeeded in this, was resolved to make his next attempt upon the children of Germanicus, the undoubted heirs to the empire; but being frustrated in his designs, by the fidelity of their governors, and the chastity of Agrippina, their mother, he changed his aims, and used all his address to persuade Tiberius to retire to some agreeable retreat, remote from Rome. From this he expected many advantages, since there could be no access to the emperor but by him. He therefore began to insinuate to Tiberius the great and numerous inconveniences of the city; the fatigues of attending the se-

nate; and the seditious temper of the inferior citizens of Rome. The emperor, either prevailed upon by his persuasions, or pursuing the natural turn of his temper, which led to indolence and debauchery, in the twelfth year of his reign left Rome, and never more returned. He spent the greatest part of his time in the island of Caprea, a place which was rendered as infamous by his pleasures, as detestable by his cruelties, which were shocking to human nature. This delightful spot lies three miles from the continent, and opposite Naples. Buried in this retreat, he abandoned himself to the most shameful enjoyment, regardless of public events. An insurrection of the Jews, upon placing his statue in Jerusalem, under the government of Pontius Pilate, gave him no sort of uneasiness.---The falling of an amphitheatre at Fidenæ, in which fifty thousand persons were either killed or wounded, no way affected his repose.

A.D. 26.

At this time he was sixty-seven years old; and his person was as displeasing, as his mind was deformed. He was quite bald before; his face was all broke out into ulcers, and covered over with plasters; his body was bent forward; while its extreme height and leanness, increased its deformity. His whole study now seemed to centre in forcing his jaded appetites. He spent whole nights in debaucheries at the table; and he appointed Pomponius Flaccus and Lucius Piso to the first posts of the empire, for no other merit than that of having sat up with him two days and two nights without interruption. ---These he called his friends of all hours. He made one Novelius Torquatus a prætor, for being

being able to drink off five bottles of wine at a draught. His luxuries of another kind were still more detestable, and seemed to increase with his drunkenness and gluttony. He made the most eminent women of Rome subservient to his lusts, and all his inventions only aimed at making his vices more extravagant and abominable. In short, in this retreat, he gave up all attention to public business; if ever he was active, it was only to do mischief.

In fact, it had been happy for mankind had he given up his suspicions when he declined the fatigues of reigning, and resigned the will to do harm, when he divested himself of the power of doing good. But from the time of his retreat he became more cruel; and Sejanus was ever active in adding fuel to his jealousy, and increasing his malignity. Secret spies and informers were placed in all parts of the city, who converted the most harmless actions into subjects of offence. The infamous minister found his aims every day succeeding; the emperor's terrors were an instrument that he wrought upon at his pleasure, and by which he levelled every obstacle to his designs. But the chief objects against whom he directed his vengeance were the children of Germanicus. These he sedulously endeavoured to render obnoxious to the emperor; to alarm him with false reports of their ambition; while at the same time he contrived to terrify them with fears of his intended cruelty. By these means he so widened the breach, that he actually produced on both sides those dispositions which he pretended to obviate: till, at length, the two princes, Nero and Drusus, being declared enemies to the state,

were

were starved to death in prison, and Agrippina, their mother, was sent into banishment.

In consequence of pretended crimes many others lost their lives. Virtue or influence were sure to draw down the vengeance of Sejanus, who proceeded, removing all who stood between him and the empire, while he was daily increasing in confidence with Tiberius, and power with the senate. The number of his statues exceeded even those of the emperor's; people swore by his fortune, in the same manner as they would have done had he been actually upon the throne, and he was more dreaded than even the tyrant who actually enjoyed the empire. But the rapidity of his rise seemed only to accelerate the greatness of his downfal. Satrius Secundus was the man who first had the boldness to accuse him to the emperor; and Antonia, the mother of Germanicus, seconded the charge. What were the particulars of his crimes, we cannot now learn; but certain it is, that he attempted to usurp the empire by aiming at the life of Tiberius. The emperor, sensible of the traitor's power, proceeded with his usual dissimulation in having him apprehended. He granted him new honours at the very time he resolved his death; but at the same time ordered him to be confined. The senate were now slow in complying with the imperial mandate; they even exceeded it. Instead of sentencing him to imprisonment, they directed his execution. A strange and instant revolution appeared in the city: of those numbers who but a moment before were pressing into the presence of Sejanus with offers of service and adulation, not one was found that would seem to be of his acquaintance. As he was conducting to execution, the people loaded him with

with insult and execration. He attempted to hide his face with his hands, but even this was denied him, and his hands were secured. He was pursued with sarcastic reproaches, his statues were instantly thrown down, and he himself shortly after strangled by the common executioner. Nor did the rage of his enemies subside with his death; his body was ignominiously dragged about the streets, and his whole family exterminated with him. Such was the end of Sejanus, the profligate minion of a profligate master; a man whose living conduct deserves our execration, but whose death may afford an useful lesson to an insulted people, and a worthless minister. The death of this wretch only inflamed the emperor's rage for further executions. The prisons were crowded with pretended accomplices in the conspiracy of Sejanus, and numbers of the most illustrious persons of Rome, of all ages and both sexes, became the victims of pretended crimes, or of jealous suspicion. To such an extent indeed were legalized murders carried, that Tiberius began to grow weary of particular executions; he therefore gave orders, that all the accused should be put to death together, without further examination. The whole city was filled with slaughter and mourning. The place of execution was a horrible scene; dead bodies, putrefying, lay heaped on each other, while even the friends of the wretched convicts were denied the satisfaction of weeping. Thus miserable were the Romans, under the arbitrary rod of this gloomy tyrant; no person, though ever so virtuous, could be safe; or rather the road to virtue was danger. Of twenty senators whom he chose for his council, he put

A.D. 31.

sixteen

sixteen to death. "Let them hate me," exclaimed the monster, "so long as they obey me."

So lost was Tiberius at last become to every feeling of humanity, that he pretended to envy the happiness of Priam in having outlived all his posterity. Scarcely a day passed without some barbarous execution, in which the sufferers were obliged to undergo the most shameful indignities and exquisite torments, or escape them by a voluntary death. Sometimes he affected to be jocular in his cruelties; particularly when a certain man, stopping an hearse, desired the dead body to tell Augustus, that his legacies to the people were yet unpaid. Tiberius sent for him, and, having paid him his share, caused him to be immediately executed, bidding him to tell Augustus, that he, at least, had been satisfied.

It might have been imagined that such cruelties, exercised at Rome, would have satiated his love of vengeance; but Caprea itself, the place secluded for his pleasures and his ease, was daily contaminated not less with his cruelties than his debauchery. He often satisfied his eyes with the tortures of the wretches who were put to death before him; and in the days of Suetonius, the rock was still shewn from which he ordered such as displeased him to be thrown headlong.

In this manner did the tyrant continue to torment his subjects, while he was himself the martyr of his own suspicions. In one of his letters to the senate, he confessed that the gods and goddesses had so afflicted and confounded him, that he knew not what or how to write: and, in fact, he had every reason for such a confession; a plotting senate, a reviling people, his bodily infirmities increased by his luxuries, and his greatest favourites

vourites without attachment, because without security. The domestic policy of the empire, also, was in the hands of miscreants; and the frontier provinces were invaded with impunity. Mesia was seized on by the Dacians and Sarmetians; Gaul was wasted by the Germans; and Armenia conquered by the king of Parthia. These were losses that might have excited the vigilance of any other governor but Tiberius. He, however, was so much a slave to his brutal appetites, that he left his provinces wholly to the care of his lieutenants; who on their part was intent rather on the accumulation of private fortune, than the safety of the state. Such a total disorder in the empire might be naturally supposed to produce a degree of anxiety in him who governed it; and in fact he was heard to wish, that Heaven and earth might perish with him when he died.

In this manner he lived, odious to all the world, and a torment to himself. At length, in the twenty-second year of his reign, he began to feel the approaches of his dissolution, and found it was time to think of a successor. After hesitating for a long while, he chose Caligula, a youth whom he seems to have selected merely on account of his vices, which were well adapted to cover the memory of his predecessor's enormities.

But though Tiberius thought fit to nominate a successor, he could by no means think of dying: though totally forsaken by his appetites and enjoyments, his dissimulation never forsook him; he therefore concealed his approaching decline with the utmost care, as if he was willing at once to hide it from the world and himself. On the day which was destined to be his last, he did all in his

power

power to impress his attendants with an opinion of his health: he continued at table till the evening; he saluted all his guests as they left the room, and read the acts of the senate, in which they had absolved some persons he had written against, with great indignation. He resolved to take signal vengeance of their disobedience, and meditated new schemes of cruelty, when he fell into such faintings as all believed were fatal. It was in this situation, that, by Macro's advice, Caligula prepared to secure his succession. He received the congratulations of the whole court, he caused himself to be acknowledged by the prætorian soldiers, and went forth from the emperor's apartment amidst the applauses of the multitude; when all of a sudden he was informed that the emperor was recovered, that he had begun to speak, and desired to eat. This unexpected account filled the whole court with terror and alarm; every one who had before been earnest in testifying their joy, now re-assumed their pretended sorrow, and left the new emperor through a feigned solicitude for the fate of the old. Caligula himself seemed thunderstruck; he preserved a gloomy silence, expecting nothing but death, instead of the empire to which he had aspired. Macro, however, cut short the difficulty and the danger, by ordering the emperor to be

A. D. 37. smothered, or as some will have it, to be poisoned. In this manner died Tiberius, in the seventy-eighth year of his age and

U. C. 785. the twenty-third of his reign. His character may be sufficiently learned from the preceding history. It only remains, therefore, to characterise the people whom he governed. The Romans were, at this time, arrived at the highest

highest pitch of effeminacy and vice. The wealth of almost every nation in the empire, having for some time circulated through the city, brought with it the luxuries peculiar to each country; so that Rome presented a detestable picture of various pollution. In this reign lived Appicius, so well known for having reduced gluttony into a system. Debaucheries of every other kind kept pace with this; while the detestable folly of the times thought it was refining upon pleasure to make it unnatural. The senators seem to have had no other study now, but how they might shew the most ingenuity in their adulation of the emperor, and in their torture of those whom he disliked. The people were still more corrupt; they had, for some years, been accustomed to live upon donations, and, being satisfied with subsistence, entirely gave up their freedom. Too effeminate and cowardly to go to war, they only railed against their governors; they were bad soldiers, and seditious citizens. Need it then be wondered at, that the history of Rome henceforth presents chiefly a dark picture of tyranny in the rulers, and of insolence in the people. Good subjects generally make good kings; while luxury, sedition, discontent, and murmurs, in the populace, as usually produce severity, cruelty, and suspicion, in him who is appointed to govern.

Little more need be said of those times, but that, in the eighteenth year of this monarch's reign, JESUS CHRIST suffered crucifixion; as if the universal depravity of mankind required no less a sacrifice than that of the Son of GOD to expiate and reclaim. Shortly after his passion, Pilate wrote Tiberius an account of his cruci-

fixion, resurrection and miracles; upon which the emperor made a report of the whole to the senate, desiring that CHRIST might be enrolled among the number of the Roman gods. But the senate being displeased that the proposal had not come first from themselves, refused to allow of his apotheosis; alleging an ancient law, which gave them the superintendence in all matters of religion. They even went so far as, by an edict, to command, that all Christians should leave the city; but Tiberius, by another edict, threatened death to all such as should accuse them; by which means they continued unmolested during the rest of his reign; and if his life did not reflect a disgrace on human nature itself, Christianity, from this act of his moderation and justice, might have ranked him among its defenders.

CHAP. XV.

The Roman affairs during the reigns of Caligula, Claudius, and Nero, in whom ended the line of the Cæsars.

CALIGULA* was the son of Germanicus, who had been the darling of the army and the people; and his father's name was a sufficient passport to popularity. Succeeding a merciless tyrant, even moderate merit would have looked like excellence. Wherefore as he approached Rome, the principal men of the state went out in crowds to meet him. He received the congratulations of the people on every side, all equally pleased in being delivered from the cruelties of Tiberius, and in hoping for new advantages from the virtues of his successor.

Caligula seemed anxious to impress them with the opinion of a happy change. Amidst the rejoicings of the multitude, he advanced, mourning, with the dead body of Tiberius, which the soldiers brought to be burnt at Rome, according to the custom of that time. Upon his entrance into the city he was received with the new titles of honour by the senate; who declared Caligula sole successor to the empire, though Gemellus the grandson of Tiberius had been left coheir. The joy for this election was not confined to the

* He received his name from Caliga, a short buskin, worn by the common sentinels, and which he used in imitation of them.

narrow bounds of Italy, it spread through the whole empire, and victims without number were sacrificed upon the occasion. Some of the people upon his going into the island of Campania, made vows for his return; and shortly after, when he fell sick, the multitude crowded whole nights round his palace, and some even devoted themselves to death, in case he recovered. In this affection of the citizens, strangers themselves seemed ambitious to participate. Artabanus, king of Parthia, who contemned his predecessor, sought the present emperor's alliance with assiduity. In short, the whole world seemed combined to praise him for virtues which their hopes, and not their experience, had given him, and in which they were universally mistaken. At first, indeed, the conduct of Caligula was calculated to deceive. He evinced the most pious regard to the memory of his deceased relations in general, and ordered the month of September to be called Germanicus, in commemoration of his father. He checked the officious zeal of some informers by alleging, that he was conscious of nothing to deserve any man's hatred, and, therefore, had no fears from their machinations. He also caused the institutions of Augustus, which had been disused in the reign of Tiberius, to be revived; and undertook to reform many abuses in the state, particularly by punishing corrupt governors. Among others, he banished Pontius Pilate into Gaul, where this unjust magistrate afterwards committed suicide.

He degraded such knights as had been guilty of any infamous crime, and banished without remission the Spintriæ, or inventors of abominable recreations, from Rome. He attempted to restore

restore the ancient manner of electing magistrates by the suffrages of the people, and gave them a free jurisdiction, without any appeal to himself. He restored some kings to their dominions, who had been unjustly dispossessed by Tiberius, and gave them the arrears of their revenues. And, that he might appear an encourager of every virtue, he ordered a female slave a large sum of money for enduring the most exquisite torments, without betraying the secrets of her master. So many concessions, and such apparent virtue, could not fail of receiving just applause. A shield of gold, bearing his image, was decreed to be carried annually to the capitol, attended by the senate, and the sons of the nobility, singing in praise of the emperor's virtues; and the day on which he mounted the throne was inserted among the festivals.

Happy had it been both for him and the empire, had he maintained the reputation with which he began. In less than eight months, however, all this show of moderation and clemency vanished, while furious passions, unexampled avarice, and capricious cruelty, began to usurp his mind. As most of the cruelties of Tiberius arose from suspicion, so most of those committed by Caligula took rise from prodigality. Some, indeed, pretend that a disorder which happened soon after his accession to the empire, entirely distorted his reason, and discomposed his understanding. However this may be, madness itself could scarcely dictate cruelties more extravagant, or inconsistencies more ridiculous, than are imputed to him.

The first object of his cruelty, and one that will scarcely be regretted by posterity, was a person

named Politus, who had devoted himself to death, in case the emperor, who was then sick, should recover. When Caligula's health was re-established, he was informed of the zeal of Politus, and actually compelled him to complete his vow. Gemellus the next who suffered from his tyrannical kinsman's inhumanity. The pretence against him was, that he had wished the emperor might not recover; and for this Caligula ordered him to kill himself. Silenus, the emperor's father-in-law, was then put to death upon slight suspicions; and Grecinus, a senator of noted integrity, refusing to witness falsely against him, shared his fate. After, followed a crowd of victims to the emperor's avarice or suspicion. Among the number of those who were sacrificed to his jealousy, was Macro, the late favourite of Tiberius, and the person to whom Caligula owed his empire. He fell justly; but in his fate, an innocent family was involved.

These cruelties seemed only the first fruits of a mind naturally timid and suspicious: his vanity and profusion soon gave rise to others which were more atrocious, as they sprung from motives less venial. His pride first appeared by his assuming to himself the title of ruler, which was usually granted only to kings. Not long after, he claimed divine honours, and gave himself the names of such divinities as he thought most agreeable to his nature. For this purpose he caused the heads of the statues of Jupiter and some other gods to be struck off, and his own to be put in their places. He frequently seated himself between Castor and Pollux, and ordered that all who came to their temple to worship, should pay their adorations only

only to him. Such, however, was the extravagant inconstancy of this capricious and insane being, that he changed his divinity as often as he changed his clothes; and was sometimes a male deity, at others a female. He even built and dedicated a temple to his own divinity, in which his statue of gold was every day dressed in similar robes to those which he himself wore, and was worshipped by crowds of adorers. His priests were numerous, and the office was eagerly sought after on account of the exquisite sacrifices that were offered up. His horse and his wife were admitted among the number; and to crown his absurdities, he became a priest to himself. His method of assuming the manners of a deity was not less ridiculous; he often went out in the full moon, and courted her in the style of a lover. He employed many inventions to imitate thunder, and would frequently defy Jupiter, crying out with a speech of Homer, "Do you conquer "me, or I will conquer you." A person so impious respecting the Deity, was not likely to feel much regard for man. He was not less notorious for the depravation of his appetites, than for his ridiculous presumptions. Neither person, place, nor sex, were obstacles to the indulgence of his unnatural lusts. There was scarcely a lady of any quality in Rome that escaped his lewdness; and, indeed, such was the degeneracy of the times, that there were few who felt this as a dishonour. He committed incest with his three sisters, and at public feasts they lay with their heads upon his bosom by turns. Of these he prostituted Livia and Agrippina to his vile companions, and then banished them as adulteresses and conspirators against his person. As for Drusilla, he took her from her husband

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Longinus, and kept her as his wife, till her death; when he made her a goddess. Nor did her example, when living, appear more dangerous to the people, than her divinity, when dead. To mourn for her death was a crime, as she was become a goddess; and to rejoice for her deity was capital, because she was dead. Nay, even silence itself was an unpardonable insensibility, either of the emperor's loss or his sister's advancement. Thus he made her subservient to his profit, as before he had done to his pleasure; raising vast sums of money by granting pardons to some, and by confiscating the goods of others. As to his marriages, whether he contracted them with greater levity, or dissolved them with greater injustice, is not easy to determine. The wife however who caught his affections most was Milonia Cæsonia, whose chief merit lay in her perfect acquaintance with all the alluring arts of her sex, for she possessed neither youth nor beauty. She continued with him during his reign, and he loved her so ridiculously, that he sometimes shewed her to his soldiers drest in armour, and sometimes to his companions, in the simple garb of nature.

His envy was no less detestable than his lusts. We are told that he put Caius to death for no other crime than because he wore a purple gown, the lustre of which called off all the regards of the spectators from himself. He ordered several persons in the city to be shaved, for having hair more beautiful than ordinary. He ordered one Proculus, who was remarkable for his beauty and the tallness of his stature, to descend into the amphitheatre, and to fight among the combatants as a gladiator. Being p[illegible] at the public games, where a particular gladiator

gladiator obtained more than ordinary applause, he was so highly displeased, that he flung himself out of the amphitheatre in a fury, crying out, with great indignation, that the Romans gave more honour to a pitiful fencer, than to the emperor himself.

But of all his vices, his prodigality was the most remarkable, and that which in some measure gave rise to the rest. The luxuries of former emperors were simplicity itself, when compared to those which he practised. He contrived new ways of bathing, where the richest oils and most precious perfumes were exhausted with the utmost profusion. He invented dishes of immense value, and had even jewels dissolved among his sauces. He sometimes had services of pure gold presented before his guests instead of meat; observing, "that a man should be an economist or an emperor."

For his favourite horse Incitatus, he built a stable of marble, and a manger of ivory; and appointed it a house, furniture, and a kitchen, in order to treat all its visitors with proper respect. Sometimes, indeed, the emperor invited Incitatus to his own table; and it is said he would have appointed it to the consulship had he not been prevented by death.

For several days together he flung considerable sums of money among the people. He ordered ships of a prodigious bulk to be built of cedar, the sterns of ivory inlaid with gold and jewels, the sails and tackling of various silks, while the decks were planted with the choicest fruit-trees, under the shade of which he often dined. There, attended by all the ministers of his pleasures, the most exquisite singers, and the most beautiful youths, he coasted along the shore of Campania

with great splendour. All his schemes seemed rather calculated to excite astonishment, than to answer the purposes of utility. He ordered houses to be built in the sea; he cut his way through rocks of prodigious bulk; he levelled mountains, and elevated plains and valleys. But the most notorious instance of his fruitless profusion was the vast bridge of Puteoli, which he undertook in the third year of his reign. To satisfy his desire of being master as well of the ocean as the land, he caused an infinite number of ships to be fastened to each other, so as to make a floating bridge from Baia to Puteoli, across an arm of the sea three miles and a half broad. The ships being placed in two rows, in form of a crescent, were secured to each other with anchors, chains, and cables. Over these were laid vast quantities of timber, and upon them earth, so as to make the whole resemble one of the streets of Rome. He next caused several houses to be built upon his new bridge, for the reception of himself and his attendants; and then repaired thither with all his court, attended by prodigious throngs of people, who came from all parts to be spectators of such an expensive pageant. It was there that Caligula, adorned with all the magnificence of eastern royalty, attended by the great officers of the army, and all the nobility of Rome, entered at one end of the bridge, and with ridiculous importance rode to the other. At night, the number of torches and other illuminations, with which this expensive structure was adorned, cast such a gleam as illuminated the whole bay, as well as the neighbouring mountains; so that he boasted of having turned night into day, as well as sea into land.

The

The next morning he again rode over in a triumphant chariot, followed by a numerous train of charioteers, and all his soldiers in glittering armour. He then ascended a rostrum erected for the occasion, where he made a solemn oration in praise of the greatness of his enterprise, and the assiduity of his workmen and his army. He then distributed rewards among his men; and a splendid feast succeeded. However, there was still wanting something to mark the disposition of the mighty projector. In the midst of the entertainment many of his attendants were thrown into the sea; several ships, filled with spectators, were attacked and sunk in a hostile manner; and, although the majority escaped through the calmness of the weather, yet many were drowned. The first storm demolished the ridiculous fabric; and soon not a wreck remained to tell his folly.

No wealth could support such unbounded profusion. In the space of little more than a year, Caligula found a fortune of about eighteen millions of our money, which Tiberius had amassed together, entirely spent in extravagance and folly. His prodigality, therefore, put him upon new methods of supplying his expences; and, as before, his profusion, so now his rapacity became boundless. He put in practice all kinds of rapine and extortion; while his principal study seemed to be to invent new imposts, and to legalize confiscation. Every thing was taxed; freedmen were obliged to purchase their freedom a second time; and many who had named him for their heir, were poisoned, that he might have the immediate possession of their fortunes. He set up a brothel in his own palace, and also kept a gaming-house, at which he presided.

On a certain occasion, having had a run of ill luck, he saw two rich knights passing through his court; upon which he suddenly rose up, and causing both to be apprehended, confiscated their estates, and then joining his former companions, boasted that he never had a better throw in his life. In a word, he was ashamed of nothing that tended to bring him money; for, on the birth of a daughter, he complained openly of his poverty, and actually stood in the portico of his palace, to receive the donations of his subjects. It would be disgusting to record all the atrocities which have been handed down of this imperial monster. He slew many of the senate, and afterwards cited them to appear as if they had killed themselves. He condemned many persons of the highest quality to dig in the mines, and to repair the highways, for offering to ridicule his profusion. He cast great numbers of old and infirm men and poor decrepid housekeepers to wild beasts, in order to free the state from such unserviceable citizens. He usually fed his wild beasts with the bodies of those wretches whom he condemned; and every tenth day sent off numbers of them to be thus devoured; which he jocosely called, "clearing his accounts."

His barbarous attempts at wit in the midst of atrocious cruelty, shew how little he was susceptible of impressions from humanity. An eminent citizen, who from an indisposition had obtained leave to retire into the island of Anticyra, a place famous for curing madness by hellebore, desiring to have his stay prolonged, Caligula ordered him to be put to death; adding, with a smile, that bleeding must certainly be useful to one who had so long taken hellebore without success. His

brutal

brutal dispositions never forsook him, even in the most festive hours; he frequently had men racked before him while he sate at table, ironically pitying their misfortunes, and blaming their executioner. Whenever he kissed his wife or mistress, he generally laid his hand on her neck, observing, that, however smooth and lovely it was, he could take it off when he pleased. Demanding of one whom he had recalled from banishment, how he employed himself in his exile; and being told that he had prayed for the death of Tiberius; Caligula, immediately concluding that those whom he had banished, wished for his death likewise, commanded that all exiles should be slain without mercy. At one time, being incensed with the citizens of Rome, he wished, "that all the Roman people had but one neck, that he might dispatch them at a single blow."

Such insupportable and capricious cruelties produced many secret conspiracies against him; but these were for a while deferred, upon account of his intended expedition against the Germans and Britons, which he undertook in the third year of his reign. For this purpose, he caused numerous levies to be made in all parts of the empire, and talked with so much resolution, that it was universally believed he would conquer all before him. His march perfectly indicated the inequality of his temper: sometimes it was so rapid, that the cohorts were obliged to leave their standards behind them; at other times it was so slow, that it resembled a funeral procession more than a military expedition. However, all these mighty preparations ended in nothing. Instead of conquering Britain, he only gave refuge to one

A. D. 39. U. C. 787.

of its banished princes: and this he described, in his letter to the senate, as taking possession of the whole island. Instead of conquering Germany, he led his army to the sea-shore; there, disposing his engines and warlike machines with great solemnity, and drawing up the men in order of battle, he went on board his galley, with which coasting along, he commanded his trumpets to sound, and the signal to be given as if for an engagement; upon which his men, having had previous orders, immediately began to gather the shells that lay upon the shore into their helmets, terming them the spoils of the conquered ocean. After this expedition, which accords so well with the character of Caligula, calling his army together, as a general after victory, he harangued them in a pompous manner, and highly extolled their achievements; and then distributing money among them, dismissed them with orders to be joyful, and congratulated them upon their riches. But that such exploits should not pass without a memorial, he caused a lofty tower to be erected by the sea-side, and ordered the galleys in which he had put to sea, to be conveyed to Rome, in a great measure, by land.

He next began to think of a triumph; but here the senate found themselves in a dilemma. They considered that a triumph would, even to himself, appear as a burlesque upon his expedition; they therefore decreed him only an ovation; and conveyed notice of this honour, in terms of the most extravagant adulation. Caligula, however, felt their timid delicacy as an insult, and informed the messengers who invited him to partake of the preparations which the senate had decreed, that he would soon be at Rome;

Rome; and then laying his hand upon his sword, added, "that he would bring that with him." In this manner, either entirely omitting his triumph, or deferring it to another time, he entered the city only with an ovation; while the senate passed the whole day in acclamations in his praise, and speeches filled with the most excessive flattery. This conduct, in some measure, served to reconcile him; and soon after, their excessive zeal in his cause entirely recovered his favour. Protogenes, one of the most intimate, and the most cruel of his favourites, coming into the house, was fawned upon by the whole body of the senate, and particularly by Proculus. On this Protogenes, with a fierce look, asked how one who was such an enemy to the emperor could be such a friend to him? There needed no more to excite the senate against Proculus. They instantly seized upon him, and violently tore him in pieces; plainly indicating by their conduct, that tyranny in the prince produces correspondent dispositions in the people.

It was after returning from this extravagant expedition, that he was waited on by a deputation from the Jews of Alexandria, who came to deprecate his anger for not worshipping his divinity as other nations had done. He was employed in looking over some houses of pleasure, and giving directions to the workmen, when Philo, the Jew, and the rest of the embassy, were admitted to an audience. They approached him with the most profound humility, but were treated with insult and banter alternately; and he left their cause at last undecided. It was upon this occasion, that Philo made the following memorable remark to his associates, who were terrified with apprehensions from the reception

they had experienced: "Fear nothing," cried he to them; "Caligula, by declaring against us, "puts God on our side."

This reign seemed to threaten universal calamity: it was, however, almost as short as it deserved to be. There had already been several conspiracies formed to destroy the tyrant, but without success. That which at last succeeded, in delivering the world from this monster, was concerted under the influence of Cassius Cherea, tribune of the prætorian bands. He was a man of experienced courage; an ardent admirer of freedom: and, consequently, an enemy to tyrants. Beside the motives which he had in common with other men, he had received repeated insults from Caligula; who took all occasions of turning him into ridicule, and impeaching him of cowardice, merely because he happened to have an effeminate voice. With Cherea were associated, in the same design, several of the most illustrious men of Rome; most of whom were actuated by revenge, for personal injuries and indignities.

While the conspirators were deliberating upon the most certain and speedy method of effecting their purpose, an unexpected incident gave new strength to the conspiracy. Pompedius, a senator of distinction, having been accused before the emperor, of speaking of him with disrespect, the informer cited one Quintilia, an actress, to confirm his accusation. Quintilia, however, denied the fact with obstinacy; and being put to the torture, at the informer's request, she bore the severest torment of the rack with unshaken constancy. But what is most remarkable of her resolution is, that she was acquainted with all the particulars of the conspiracy; and, though

Cherea

Cherea was the person appointed to preside at her torture, she revealed nothing: on the contrary, when she was led to the rack, she trod upon the toe of one of the conspirators, intimating at once her kowledge of the confederacy, and her own resolution not to divulge it. In this manner she suffered, until all her limbs were dislocated; and in that deplorable state was presented to the emperor, who ordered her a gratuity for what she had suffered. Cherea could now no longer contain his indignation, at being thus made the instrument of a tyrant's cruelty. After several deliberations, it was at last resolved to attack him during the continuance of the Palatine games, which lasted four days; and to strike the blow when his guards should have the least opportunity to defend him. The first three days of the games passed without affording that opportunity which was so ardently desired. Cherea then began to apprehend, that deferring the completion of the conspiracy might be a means of divulging it; he even began to dread, that the honour of killing the tyrant might fall to the lot of some other person, more intrepid or more fortunate than himself. He determined, therefore, to execute the plot the very next day, when Caligula should pass through a private gallery, to some baths, not far distant from the palace.

This being settled, the conspirators waited the greatest part of the day with extreme anxiety for a favourable moment; and at one time, Cherea, exasperated to madness, was ready to rush into the midst of the people and perpetrate the deed. Just at that instant, however, while he was yet hesitating what he should do, Asprenas, one of the conspirators, persuaded Caligula to go to the

bath, and take some slight refreshment, in order to enjoy the conclusion of the entertainment at the games with greater relish. The emperor, therefore, rising up, the conspirators used every precaution to keep off the throng, and to surround him, under pretence of greater assiduity. Upon entering a little vaulted gallery that led to the bath, he was met by a band of Grecian children, who had been instructed in singing, and were come to perform in his presence. He was once more, therefore, going to return into the theatre with them, had not the leader of the band excused himself, on account of his voice being affected by a cold. This was the moment which Cherea seized to strike him to the ground; crying out, "Tyrant, think upon this!" Immediately after, the other conspirators rushed in, and dispatched him with thirty wounds.

A. D. 40. Such was the merited death of Caius Caligula, in the twenty-ninth year of his age, after a reign of less than four years, in which the greatest possible atrocities were crowded. With him his wife and infant daughter also perished, the one being stabbed by a centurion, the other having its brains dashed out against the wall. His money was melted down by a decree of the senate; and it seems to have been the universal wish, that neither his features nor his name might be transmitted to posterity.

A. D. 41. U. C. 789. The conspirators, who had aimed only at destroying a tyrant, without reflecting on the future condition of the state, had no sooner dispatched Caligula, than they judged it necessary for their safety to retire, while hopes and fears agitating the mass of the people, a considerable ferment

was

was produced, and several lost their lives. A calm at length succeeding, the senate was permitted to assemble, in order to deliberate upon what was necessary to be done in the present emergency.

Saturninus, who was then consul, insisted much upon the benefits of liberty, and talked in raptures of Cherea's fortitude, alleging that it deserved the noblest reward. The senate, long harrassed by the cruelty of tyrants, panted once more for the restoration of their former freedom; and even ventured to talk of extinguishing the name of Cæsar. With this resolution, they brought over some cohorts of the city to their views, and boldly seized upon the Capitol. But it was now too late for Rome to regain her pristine liberty, as the populace, and the army in general, opposed the design. In this opposition of interest, and a variety of opinions, chance seemed at last to decide the fate of the empire. Some soldiers happening to run about the palaces, discovered Claudius, Caligula's uncle, lurking in a secret place, where he had hid himself through fear. This man, who had hitherto been despised for his imbecility, they resolved to make an emperor; and accordingly they carried him upon their shoulders to the camp, where they proclaimed his elevation, at the moment he expected nothing but death.

The senate, perceiving that force alone was likely to settle the succession, made a merit of necessity, and passing a decree to confirm the election of the military, went soon after in a body, to render Claudius their compulsive homage. Cherea was the first who fell a sacrifice to the jealousy of this new monarch. He met death with all the fortitude of an ancient Ro-

man, desiring to die by the same sword with which he had killed Caligula. Lupus, his friend, was put to death with him; and Sabinus, one of the conspirators, laid violent hands on himself.

Claudius, uncle to the late tyrant, and nephew to Tiberius, was fifty years old when he began to reign. The complicated diseases of his infancy had, in some measure, affected all the faculties both of his body and mind. Not that he was entirely destitute of understanding, since he had made a tolerable proficiency in the Greek and Latin languages, and even wrote a history of his own time; but his abilities did not rise to mediocrity, and his capacity for business was reckoned still more contemptible. Nevertheless, the caprice of fortune made him an emperor, and the commencement of his reign augured well. He began by passing an act of oblivion for all former words and actions, and disannulled all the cruel edicts of Caligula. He forbade all persons, upon severe penalties, to sacrifice to him, as they had done to his predecessor. He was assiduous in hearing and examining complaints; and frequently administered justice in person; tempering by his mildness, the severity of strict justice. We are told of his bringing a woman to acknowledge her son, by adjudging her to marry him. The tribunes of the people coming one day to attend him, when he was on his tribunal, he courteously excused himself, for not having room to ask them to sit down. He took a more than ordinary care that Rome should be continually supplied with corn and provisions. He was not less assiduous in his buildings, in which he excelled almost all who went before him. He constructed an amazing aqueduct, called after his own name, which

brought

brought water, for the use of the city, from forty miles distance, through high mountains, and over deep valleys. He made also an haven at Ostia; a work of such immense expence, that his successors were unable to maintain it. But his greatest work of all was draining the lake Fucinus, the largest in Italy, and conveying its water into the Tiber, in order to strengthen the current of that river.

But while he was intent on what might adorn or be beneficial to the interior, he did not neglect the distant provinces. He restored several princes to their kingdoms, who had been unjustly dispossessed by his predecessors; and both his favour and his enmity, evinced a sense of justice.

He even undertook to gratify the people by foreign conquest. The Britons, who had, for nearly one hundred years, been left in the undisturbed possession of their own island, began to seek the mediation of Rome, in regard to their intestine quarrels; and one Bericus, who came as a deputy to Rome, by many arguments, persuaded the emperor to make a descent upon the island, magnifying the advantages that would attend the conquest of it. In pursuance of his advice, therefore, Plautius, the prætor, was ordered to go into Gaul, and make preparations for this great expedition. At first, however, his soldiers seemed averse from the scheme, declaring that they were unwilling to make war beyond the limits of the world, for so they judged Britain to be; but by dint of persuasion they embarked; and the Britons, under the conduct of their king Cynobelinus, were several times overthrown. A. D. 49.

These

These successes soon after induced Claudius to visit Britain in person, that he might participate in the honour of conquest; but after continuing there no more than sixteen days, in which his time was wholly taken up in receiving homage, he returned to Rome. Great rejoicings were made on this occasion: the senate decreed him a splendid triumph; triumphal arches were erected to his honour, and annual games instituted to commemorate his victories. In the mean time, the war was vigorously prosecuted by Plautius and his lieutenant Vespasiad, who, according to Suetonius, fought thirty battles with the enemy, and by that means reduced a part of the island into the form of a Roman province. However, this war broke out afresh under the government of Ostorius, who succeeded Plautius. The Britons, either despising him for want of experience, or hoping to gain advantages over a person newly come to command, rose up in arms, and disclaimed the Roman power. The Iceni, the Cangi, and the Brigantes, made a powerful resistance, though they were at length overcome; but the Silures, or inhabitants of South Wales, under their king Caractacus, proved very formidable opponents. This prince, with great conduct, removed the seat of war into the most inaccessible parts of the country; and for nine years kept the Romans in continual alarm. A. D. 51.

Caractacus, however, at last finding himself obliged to come to a decisive engagement, addressed his countrymen with calm resolution; telling them, that this battle would either establish their liberty, or confirm their servitude; that they ought to remember the bravery of their ancestors, by whose valour they were delivered

from

from taxes and tributes; and that this was the time to shew themselves equal to their progenitors. Nothing, however, that undisciplined valour could perform, availed against the conduct of the Roman legions. After an obstinate fight, the Britons were entirely routed: the wife and daughter of Caractacus were taken prisoners; and himself afterwards treacherously delivered up to the conquerors. When he was brought to Rome, nothing could exceed the curiosity of the people, to behold a man who had, for so many years, braved the power of the empire. On his part, he testified no marks of base dejection; but, as he was led through the streets, happening to observe the splendour of every object round him, "Alas! (cried he) how is it "possible, that people possessed of such mag-"nificence at home, could think of envying "Caractacus an humble cottage in Britain!" When he was brought before the emperor, while the other captives sued for pity with the most abject lamentations, Caractacus stood before the tribunal with an intrepid air, and seemed rather willing to accept of pardon, than meanly solicitous of suing for it. "If," cried he, towards the close of his speech "I had yielded immediately, "and without opposition, neither my fortune "would have been remarkable, nor your glory "memorable: you would have ceased to be "victorious, and I had been forgotten. If now, "therefore, you spare my life, I shall continue "a perpetual example of your clemency." Claudius had the generosity to pardon him, and Ostorius was decreed a triumph, which, however, he did not live to enjoy. Though the Britons were thus humbled, they were by no means entirely subdued: several new revolts ensued;

and

and a warfare was carried on in that country, during the whole reign of Claudius.

But to return from this anticipation of events, Claudius, who had begun his reign with much promise, soon began to lesson his care for the public, and to commit to his favourites all the concerns of the empire. Men of narrow capacities and feeble minds are only good or evil, as they happen to fall into the hands of virtuous or vicious guides; and, unhappily for him, his directors were, to the last degree, abandoned and infamous. The chief of these was his wife, Messalina, whose name is almost become a common term to express female profligacy. Subordinate to her were the emperor's freedmen: Pallas, the treasurer; Narcissus, the secretary of state; and Callistus, the master of the requests. These entirely governed Claudius; so that he was only left the fatigues of ceremony, while they possessed all the power of the state.

It would be tedious to enumerate the various cruelties which these insidious advisers obliged the feeble emperor to commit; even against his own family, which, on one pretence or another, was almost exterminated. Many others fell a sacrifice to the jealousy of Messalina and her minions, who bore so great a sway in the state, that all offices, dignities, and governments, were entirely at their disposal; while every thing was put to sale. These disorders in the ministers of government did not fail to produce conspiracies against the emperor; some of which were quashed when in embryo. But what gave him the greatest uneasiness, and was punished with the most unrelenting severity, was the revolt of Camillus, his lieutenant-governor in Dalmatia. This general, incited by many of the principal men of Rome, openly rebelled

agains

against him, and assumed the title of emperor. Nothing could exceed the terrors of Claudius on this occasion: his nature and his crimes had disposed him to be more cowardly than the rest of mankind; so that whem Camillus commanded him by his letters to relinquish the empire, and retire to a private station, he seemed inclined to obey. But his fears upon this account were soon removed; for the legions which had declared for Camillus, being terrified by some remarkable prodigies, shortly after abandoned him; so that the man whom but five days before they had acknowledged as emperor, they now thought it no infamy to destroy. The cruelty of Messalina and her minions upon this occasion, knew no bounds. They so wrought upon the emperor's fears and suspicions, that numbers were executed without trial or proof; and scarcely any, even those who were but barely suspected, escaped, unless by ransoming their lives with their fortunes.

Among the number of illustrious sufferers, were Pætus and his faithful Arria. Cæcina Pætus, one of those unfortunate men who joined with Camillus after his associate was slain by the army, had endeavoured to escape into Dalmatia. There he was apprehended, and put on board a ship, in order to be conveyed to Rome. Arria, who had been long the partner of his affections and misfortunes, entreated his keepers to be taken in the same vessel, with her husband. "It is usual," said she, "to grant a man of his "quality a few slaves, to dress, and undress, and "attend him; but I will perform all these of-"fices, and save you the trouble of a more nu-"merous retinue." Her fidelity, however, could not prevail. She therefore hired a fisherman's

bark, and thus kept company with the ship in which her husband was conveyed, through the voyage. They had an only son equally remarkable for the beauty of his person, and the rectitude of his disposition. This youth died at the time his father was confined to his bed by a dangerous disorder. However, the affectionate Arria concealed her son's death, and in her visits to her husband testified no marks of sadness. Being asked how her son did, she replied that he was calm, and only left her husband's chamber to give a vent to her tears. When Pætus was condemned to die by his own hands, Arria used every art to inspire him with resolution; and at length, finding him continue timid and wavering, she took the poniard, and stabbing herself in his presence, presented it him, saying, "It gives me no pain, my Pætus."

While the favourites of the emperor endeavoured to establish his and their own authority by such cruelties, they found it necessary to support their influence by working on the terrors of Claudius, which they did so effectually, that he never ventured to go to any feast without being surrounded by his guards, nor would he suffer any man to approach him without a previous search. Thus wholly employed by his anxiety for self-preservation, he entirely left the care of the state to his favourites, who by degrees gave him a relish for slaughter. Nor was he less regardless of the persons he condemned, than cruel in the infliction of their punishment. Such was his extreme stupidity, that he would frequently invite those to supper whom he had put to death but the day before; and often denied having given orders for an execution, but a few hours after pronouncing sentence. Suetonius

tonius assures us, that there were no less than thirty-five senators, and above three hundred knights, executed in his reign; and that such was his unconcern in the midst of cruelty, that one of his tribunes bringing him an account of a certain senator that was executed, he owned that he had quite forgot his offence, but calmly acquiesced in his punisment.

In the mean time, Messalina, become more daring by long success in crimes, set no bounds to her enormities. After appearing for some years insatiable in her desires, she at length fixed her affections upon Caius Silius, the most beautiful youth in Rome. She obliged him to divorce his wife, Junia Syllana, that he might entirely devote himself to her, cohabiting with him in the most open manner, and treating him with the most shameless familiarity. The imperial ornaments were even conveyed to his house; and the emperor's slaves and attendants had orders to wait upon the adulterer. Nothing was wanting to complete the insolence of their conduct, but their being married; which was soon after effected, during a temporary retirement of the emperor at Ostia. Messalina, on this occasion, giving a loose to her passion, appeared as a Bacchanalian with a thyrsus in her hand; while Silius assumed the character and dress of Bacchus. A troop of singers and dancers attended, who heightened the revel with the most lascivious songs and the most indecent attitudes. In the midst of this riot, one Valens, a buffoon, is said to have climbed a tree; and being demanded what he saw, answered, that he perceived a dreadful storm coming from Ostia, What this fellow spoke at random was actually

at that time in preparation. It seems that some time before there had been a quarrel between Messalina and Narcissus the emperor's first freedman. This subtle minister now availed himself of the opportunity which the mad passion of the empress furnished, to effect her ruin, by a discovery of her infamy, and urging the necessity of speedy punishment. Claudius, quite terrified at so unexpected a relation, frequently interrupted his freedman, by asking if he was still master of the empire. Being assured that he yet had it in his power to continue so, he resolved to punish the affront offered to his dignity without delay. Nothing could exceed the consternation of Messalina and her thoughtless companions, upon being informed that the emperor was coming to disturb their festivity. Every one retired in the utmost confusion. Silius was taken; and Messalina, after a short interval of concealment, attempted to mollify the emperor's wrath; but finding him inflexible, she was obliged to retire in despair.

Narcissus being thus far successful, led Claudius to the house of the adulterer; where he shewed him the apartments adorned with the spoils of his own palace; and then conducting him to the prætorian camp, revived his courage by giving him assurances of the alacrity of the soldiers in his defence. Having thus artfully wrought upon his fears and resentment, the wretched Silius was commanded to appear, who making no defence, was instantly put to death in the emperor's presence. Several others shared the same fate; but Messalina still flattering herself with hopes of a pardon, from her natural influence over Claudius, and the well known timidity of his disposition. In fact, after returning

turning from the execution of her paramour having allayed his resentment in a banquet, he began to relent. He therefore commanded his attendants to apprise that miserable creature, meaning Messalina, of his resolution to hear her accusation the next day, and ordered her to be in readiness with her defence. The permission to defend herself might have proved fatal to Narcissus, if he had not rushed out, and ordered the tribunes and centurions, who were in readiness, to execute her immediately, by the emperor's command. Upon their arrival at the place of her retirement, they found her stretched upon the ground, attended by her mother Lepida, who exhorted her to prevent her punishment by a voluntary death. But she was too much softened by luxury to be able to face death without terror; and gave way to tears and unpitied distress. At length, taking a sword from one of the soldiers, she put it to her breast; but her fears still prolonging the blow, the tribune ran her through the body, and so dispatched her. Claudius heard of her death in the midst of his banquet; but shewed not the least appearance of emotion. He continued at table with his usual tranquillity, while neither his affection for her, the joy of her accusers, nor the sorrow of his children, had the least visible effect upon his temper. As a proof, however, that this proceeded rather from stupidity than fortitude, the day following, while he was sitting at table, he asked why Messalina was absent, as if he had totally forgotten her crimes and her fate,

Claudius, being now a widower, declared publicly, that as he had been hitherto unfortunate

fortunate in his marriages, he would remain single for the future. But it was not long before he espoused Agrippina, the daughter of his brother Germanicus, a woman who had poisoned her former husband, and who, if possible, was more practised in vice even than the late empress. Neither her character, however, nor the near relation in which she stood to Claudius, prevented him from taking her to his bed; for having been used to live under the control of women, he was unhappy without a female director.

Agrippina's chief aims were to gain the succession in favour of her son Nero, and to set aside the claims of young Britannicus, son to the emperor and Messalina. For this purpose she married Nero to the emperor's daughter Octavia, a few days after her own marriage. Not long after this, she urged the emperor to strengthen the succession, in imitation of his predecessors, by making a new adoption; and advising him to take in her son Nero, in some measure, to divide the fatigues of government. The feeble prince, who implicitly obeyed his prompter, yielded to her persuasions, and adopted Nero in preference to his only son Britannicus. Her next care was to increase her son's popularity, by giving him Seneca for a tutor. This excellent man, by birth a Spaniard, had been banished into the island of Corsica by the intrigues of Messalina. The people loved and admired him for his genius, but still more for his strict morality; and a part of his reputation therefore necessarily devolved on his pupil. Agrippina was not less assiduous in pretending the utmost affection for Britannicus; whom

whom, however, she resolved at a proper time to destroy; but her jealousy was not confined to one object, nor her ambition gratified by ordinary indulgences. Claudius was more a slave than ever, but he did not bear her tyranny without reluctance. In short, Agrippina's imperious temper began to grow insupportable to him; and he was heard to declare, when heated with wine, that it was his fate to suffer the disorders of his wives, and to be their executioner. This expression sunk deep on her mind, and engaged all her faculties to prevent the blow. Her first care was to remove Narcissus, whom she hated upon many accounts, but particularly for his attachment to his master. This minister, for some time, found means to counteract her designs; but at length thought fit to retire, by a voluntary exile, into Campania. The unhappy emperor, now exposed to all the machinations of his insidious consort, without one friend on whom he could rely, seemed, nevertheless, regardless of the dangers that threatened him. His affection for Britannicus was perceived every day to increase; and this served to increase the vigilance of Agrippina, and add stings to her jealousy. She therefore hesitated no longer to practice a crime which she had previously meditated; namely, that of poisoning her husband. As she had been long conversant in this horrid practice, she applied to a woman called Locusta, notorious for assisting on such occasions. The poison was given the emperor among mushrooms, a dish he was particularly fond of. Shortly after having eaten, he dropped down insensible; but this caused no alarm, as it was usual with him

to

to sit eating till he had stupified all his faculties, and was obliged to be carried off to his bed from the table. However, his constitution seemed to overcome the effects of the potion, which alarming Agrippina, she directed an abandoned physician, who was her creature, to thrust a poisoned feather down his throat, under pretence of making him vomit; which soon put a period to his life.

A. D. 95.
U. C. 803.

The reign of this emperor, feeble and impotent as it was, produced no great calamities in the state, since his cruelties were chiefly levelled at those about his person. The citizens of Rome*, at this time amounted to six millions eight hundred and forty-thousand souls. However, the general character of the times was that of corruption and luxury; for wherever there is a great superfluity of wealth, there will also be seen a thousand vicious modes of exhausting it. The military spirit of Rome, though much relaxed, still continued to awe mankind; for even in this weak and inglorious reign, the terror of the Roman name alone kept the rest of the world in submission,

Agrippina having thus succeeded against the life of her husband, employed all her address to conceal the catastrophe, till she had arranged her measures for securing the election of Nero. for whose advancement she had been plotting so long and with such anxiety. that when an astrologer once told her, "he would one day be emperor, and the cause of her death," she

* Persons having the rights of citizenship, but not all living at Rome.

replied,

replied, "Let him kill me, provided he reign." So well did she counterfeit grief in her own family, and deceit in regard to the public, that it was not actually known that Claudius was dead, till Nero, accompanied by Burrhus, prefect of the prætorian guards, issued to receive the congratulations of the people and the army. The cohort, then attending, proclaimed him with the loudest acclamations, though not without making some enquiries after Britannicus*. He was carried in a chariot to the rest of the army; where, having made a speech proper for the occasion, and promising them a donation, in the manner of his predecessors, he was without difficulty declared emperor by the army, the senate, and the people.

Nero, though but seventeen years of age, began his reign with the general approbation of mankind. He shewed the most pious regard to the memory of the deceased emperor, and procured him to be canonized. As he owed the empire to Agrippina, so, in the beginning, he submitted to her directions with the most implicit obedience. On her part, she seemed resolved on governing with her natural ferocity, and considered her private animosities as the only rule to guide her in public justice. Immediately after the death of Claudius, she caused Silanus, the pro-consul of Asia, to be assassinated, upon very slight suspicions, and without even acquainting the emperor with her design. The next object of her resentment was Narcissus, the late emperor's favourite; a man equally no-

* The son of Claudius by Messalina, and at that time a child.

torious

torious for the greatness of his wealth, and the number of his crimes. He too was put to death by Agrippina's order, although Nero refused his consent.

Seneca and Burrhus, the emperor's tutor and general, opposed these cruelties; for, though they owed their rise to the empress, they were above being the instruments of her baseness. They therefore combined in an opposition; and gaining the young emperor on their side, formed a plan of power, at once the most merciful and wise. In fact, the beginning of Nero's reign, while he continued to act by their counsels, has always been considered as a model for succeeding princes. The famous emperor Trajan used to say, "that for the first five years, all other governments came short of his." The young monarch knew so well how to conceal his innate depravity, that his nearest friends could scarcely perceive his virtues to be assumed. He appeared just, liberal, and humane; and his condescension and affability were not less than his other virtues; so that the Romans began to think, that Heaven had sent them a prince, whose clemency would compensate for the tyranny of his predecessors.

In the mean time, Agrippina, who was excluded from any share in the government, attempted, by every possible method, to maintain her declining power. Perceiving that her son had fallen in love with a freedwoman, named Acte, and dreading the influence of a concubine, she tried every art to prevent his growing passion. However, in so corrupt a court, it was no difficult matter for the emperor to find other confidents, ready to assist him in his wishes.

wishes. The gratification of his passion, therefore, in this instance, only served to increase his hatred for the empress. Nor was it long before he gave evident marks of his disobedience, by displacing Pallas, her chief favourite. It was upon this occasion, that she first perceived the total declension of her authority, which threw her into the most ungovernable fury. In order to add terror to her rage, she proclaimed that Britannicus, the real heir to the throne, was still living, and in a condition to receive his father's empire, which was now possessed by an usurper. She threatened to go to the camp, and there expose his baseness and her own, invoking all the furies to her assistance. These menaces served to alarm the suspicions of Nero, who, though apparently guided by his governors, yet already began to give way to his natural depravity. He therefore determined upon the death of Britannicus; and contrived to have him poisoned at a public banquet. Agrippina, however, still retained her natural ferocity; she took every opportunity of obliging and flattering the tribunes and centurions; she heaped up treasures, with a rapacity almost unexampled; all her actions seemed calculated to raise a faction, and make herself formidable to the emperor. Upon this, Nero commanded her German guard to be taken from her, and obliged her to lodge out of the palace. He also interdicted particular persons from visiting her, and went himself but rarely and ceremoniously to pay her his respects. Thus she soon found, that, with the emperor's favour, she had also lost the assiduity of her friends. She was even accused

accused by Silana. of conspiring against her son, and of designing to marry Plautius, a person descended from Augustus, and to make him emperor; but her day of retribution was not yet arrived.

As Nero increased in years, his crimes seemed to increase in proportion. He now began to take a strange pleasure in running about the city by night, disguised like a slave. In this vile habit he entered taverns and brothels, attended by the lewd ministers of his pleasures, attempting the lives of such as opposed him, and frequently endangering his own. In imitation of the emperor's example, numbers of profligate young men infested the streets likewise; so that every night the city was filled with tumult and disorder. However, the people bore all these levities, which they ascribed to the emperor's youth, with patience; having occasion every day to experience his liberality, and having also been gratified by the abolition of many of their taxes. The provinces also were no way affected by these riots; for, except some disturbances on the side of the Parthians, which were soon suppressed, they enjoyed the most perfect tranquillity.

But those sensualities, which for the first four years of his reign, produced but few disorders, in the fifth became alarming. He first began to transgress the bounds of decency, by deserting Octavia, his present wife, and taking to his arms Poppea, the wife of his favourite Otho, a woman more celebrated for her beauty than her virtues. This was another event painful to Agrippina, who vainly used all her interest

to disgrace Poppea, and, by the most infamous offers to reinstate herself in her son's lost favour. The consequence of this was, that she inflamed the resentment of Poppea, and at last impelled Nero to commit parricide, in order to satisfy her revenge. She began her arts by urging him to divorce his present wife, and marry her: She reproached him as a pupil, who wanted not only power over others, but liberty to direct himself. She insinuated the dangerous designs of Agrippina; and, by degrees, accustomed his mind to reflect upon parricide without horror. His cruelties, however, against his mother began rather by several circumstances of petty malice, than by any downright injury. He encouraged several persons to teize her with litigious suits: he employed some of the meanest of the people to sing satirical songs against her under her windows. At last, finding these ineffectual to break her spirit, he resolved on putting her to death. His first attempt was by poison; but this, though twice repeated, proved ineffectual, as she had fortified her constitution against it by antidotes. A ship was next contrived in so artificial a manner as to fall to pieces in the water, on board which she was invited to sail to the coasts of Calabria. However, this plot was as ineffectual as the former: the mariners not being all apprised of the secret, disturbed each other's operations; so that the ship not sinking as readily as was expected, Agrippina found means to continue swimming, till she was taken up by a vessel casually passing in the same track.

Nero thus finding that all his machinations were discovered, resolved to throw off the mask, and put her openly to death. To give some

colour of justice to this horrid deed, he caused a report to be spread, that she had conspired against him; and a poniard was dropped at his feet by one who pretended a command from Agrippina to assassinate him. In consequence of this, he applied to his governors Seneca and Burrhus, for their advice and assistance. Things were now come to such a crisis, that no middle way could be taken; and either Nero or Agrippina was to fall. Seneca, therefore kept a profound silence; while Burrhus, with more resolution, refused to be the perpetrator of so great a crime. In this embarassment, his freedman, Anicetus offered his services; which Nero accepted with the greatest joy, crying out, "that this was the first moment he ever found himself an emperor." This wretch, therefore, taking with him a body of soldiers, surrounded the house of Agrippina, and then forced open her doors. As he broke into her apartment, accompanied by two soldiers, she immediately read her fate in their looks: but still preserved presence of mind sufficient to ask the cause of their coming. "If," cried she, "you come to en-"quire after my health, you may inform the "emperor that I am better; but if you come "with any worse intention, you alone, and "not my son, must be guilty." To this the executioners made no reply, but one of them dashed his club at her head, which, nevertheless, did not dispatch her. Now, therefore, finding that she was to expect no mercy, and seeing Anicetus draw his sword to stab her, she presented her bosom, crying out, "Strike here, "for this place gave birth to a monster." The executioners having dispatched her, with several wounds, left her dead on the couch, and went

to

to inform Nero of what they had done A. D.
Some historians say, that this monster 60.
came immediately to view the body; end- U. C.
ing this horrid survey by coolly ob- 808.
serving, that he never thought his mother had been so handsome. However this be, he vindicated his conduct next day to the senate, who not only excused, but applauded his impiety.

All the mounds of virtue being thus broken down, Nero gave a loose to his appetites. There seemed a strange contrast in his disposition; for while he practised cruelties, which were sufficient to freeze the mind with horror, he was fond of those amusing arts that soften and refine the heart. He was particularly addicted, even from childhood, to music, and not totally ignorant of Poetry. But chariot driving was his favourite pursuit. He never missed the circus, when chariot-races were to be exhibited there; appearing at first privately, and soon after publicly; till, at last, his passion increasing by indulgence, he was not content with being merely a spectator, but resolved to become one of the principal performers. His governors, however, did all in their power to restrain this pitiful ambition; but finding him resolute, they enclosed a space of ground in the valley of the Vatican, where he first exhibited only to some chosen spectators, but shortly after invited the whole city. The praises of his flattering subjects only stimulated him still more to those unbecoming pursuits; so that he now resolved to assume a new character, and to appear as a singer upon the stage. He had been instructed in the principles of music from his childhood; and, upon

his advancement to the empire, he had put himelf under the most celebrated masters. He atiently submitted to their instructions, and ised all those methods which singers practise, ither to mend the voice, or improve its volubiity. Yet, notwithstanding all his assiduity, his oice was both feeble and unpleasant; but such s it was, he resolved to exhibit it to the public. lis first appearance was at games of his own astitution, called Juveniles; where he advanced pon the stage, tuning his instrument to his ice, with great appearance of skill. A groupe tribunes and centurians attended behind him; hile his old governor, Burrhus, stood near his opeful pupil, with indignation in his countence, and praises on his lips.

Furnished with such talents as these, for iving pleasure, he was resolved to make the ur of his empire, and give the most public isplay of his abilities wherever he came. The lace of his first exhibition, upon leaving Rome, vas at Naples. The crowds there were so great, and the curiosity of the people so earnest in hearing him, that they did not perceive an earthquake which happened while he was singing. While he continued to perform, no person was permitted to depart from the theatre, upon any pretence whatsoever; but some were so fatigued with hearing him, that they leaped privately from the walls, or pretended to fall into fainting ts, in order to be carried out. An old senator, amed Vespasian, happening to fall asleep upon ne of these occasions, very narrowly escaped ith his life, for such a mark of disrespect.

Satiated with the flattery of his countrymen, Nero determined to pass over into Greece, in order

der to receive new theatrical honours. The cities of Greece having made a law to send him musical crowns as a conqueror at all the games; deputies were accordingly dispatched with this important embassy. As he one day entertained these acceptable strangers, and conversed with them with the utmost familiarity, they entreated to hear him sing. Upon his complying, the artful Greeks knew how to satisfy his vanity, by the exaggeration of their praise. They testified all the marks of ecstacy and rapture. Applauses so warm caused Nero to exclaim in conscious self-sufficiency, "that the Greeks alone were worthy to hear him;" and accordingly prepared without delay to go into Greece; where he spent the whole year ensuing. In this journey his retinue resembled an army in number; but it was only composed of singers, dancers, tailors, and other attendants upon the theatre. He traversed Greece, and exhibited at all their games, which he ordered to be celebrated in the same year. At all of them he came off conqueror, if not by merit, at least by favour; and obtained no fewer than eighteen hundred crowns. Upon his return from Greece, he entered Naples through a breach in the walls of the city, as was customary with those who were conquerors in the Olympic games. But all his splendour was reserved for his entry into Rome. There he appeared seated in the chariot of Augustus, dressed in robes of purple, and crowned with wild olive, which was the Olympic garland. He bore in his hand the Pythian crown; and had eighteen hundred more carried before him. Beside him sat one Diodorus, a musician; and behind him followed a band of singers, as nu-

 merous

merous as a legion, who sung in honour of his victories. The senate, the knights, and the people, attended this puerile pageant, filling the air with their acclamations. The whole city was illuminated; every street smoked with incense; wherever he passed, victims were slain; the pavement was strewed with saffron; whilst garlands of flowers and ribbons were showered down upon him from the windows as he passed along. So many honours only inflamed his desire of acquiring new; and he now began to take lessons in wrestling, willing to imitate Hercules in strength, as he had rivalled Apollo in activity and the musical arts.

Happy would it have been for mankind, had Nero confined himself to these puerilities, and contented with being contemptible without being formidable also; but his cruelties even outdid all his other extravagancies. A complete list of those would form a volume; full of a hideous repetition of suspicions without cause, and punishments without mercy. Soon after the death of Agrippina, he ordered Domitia, his aunt, to be poisoned. Some say, that Burrhus, who died shortly after, underwent the same fate. Octavia, his wife, was divorced; and put to death: and Poppæa made empress in her stead. Sylla and Torquatus Syllanus, with many others, either fell by the executioner, or escaped his vengeance by a voluntary death.

He seemed even studious to refine on sensuality, and to find out pleasures as well as crimes against nature. Being attired in the habit of a woman, and covered with a yellow veil, like a bride, he was wedded to one of his abominable companions, called Pythagoras, and again to his

his freedman Doriphorus. On the other hand, that he might be every way detestable, he became the husband of a youth named Sporus, whom he had previously deprived of the marks of virility. With this preposterous bride, decked out in all the ornaments of an empress, he went to all public places. Such violations of all decency, though they might escape punishment, could not escape contempt. It was observed, upon one of these occasions, that the world had been happy if the emperor's father had been married only to such a spouse. But he was so indifferent to opinion, that he was often heard to observe, "he had rather be hated than loved." When one happened to say in his presence, that the world might be burnt when he was dead: "Nay," replied Nero, "let it be burnt while I "am living." In fact, a great part of the city of Rome was consumed by fire shortly after; and most historians ascribe the conflagration to him. It is said, that he stood upon a high tower, during the continuance of the flames, enjoying the sight, and repeating in a player's habit, and in a theatrical manner, some verses upon the destruction of Troy. However, the emperor used every art to throw the odium of so detestable an action from himself, and to fix it upon the Christians; who were at that time gaining ground in Rome. Nothing could be more dreadful than the persecution raised against them upon this false accusation. Some were covered with skins of wild beasts; and, in that figure, devoured by dogs. Some were crucified, and others burnt alive. "When the day was not sufficient for their tor "tures, the flames in which they perished,"* says

A. D. 64.
U. C. 813.

says the energetic Tacitus, "served to illumi-"nate the night;" while Nero, dressed in the habit of a charioteer, regaled himself with their tortures from his gardens; and entertained the people at one time with their sufferings, at another, with the games of the circus. In this persecution, St. Paul was beheaded; and St. Peter was crucified with his head downwards; which attitude he chose, as being more dishonourable than that of his divine master. The inhuman monster, conscious of being suspected of burning the city, in order to wipe off the charge, took great care to re-edify it, even with greater beauty than before. But he set no bounds to the magnificence with which his own palace that had shared in the conflagration, was rebuilt. It now received the name of the golden palace, from the rich materials of which it was composed; as all the apartments were adorned with the richest metals, and the most precious jewels. The principal hall was circular, and the ceiling moveable, and went round in imitation of the heavenly motions. The extent of the palace was not less amazing than its beauty. It was so large as to contain within its walls, lakes, parks, and vineyards. The entrance was spacious enough to receive a colossal statue of the emperor, a hundred and twenty feet high. In short, nothing, either before or since, ever equalled the magnificence or richness of this structure. Nero, however, when it was finished, only said cooly, "that he was now lodged like a man." Nor did he seem to regard the extortions and exactions in all the provinces, which were made to defray the enormous expences, either of his vanity or his vices.

Hitherto,

Hitherto his cruelties had fallen chiefly upon strangers and his nearest connections. A conspiracy now formed against him by Piso, a man of great power and integrity, which was prematurely discovered, by the indiscrete zeal of a woman named Epicharis, opened a new train of suspicions that destroyed many of the principal families in Rome. A. D. 65.

Numbers of the chief men of the city, either involved in the conspiracy, or suspected of being so, were executed without mercy. But, the two most remarkable, were Seneca the philosopher, and his nephew Lucan the poet. It is not certainly known, whether Seneca was really concerned in the conspiracy or not. This great man, after long bewailing the savage propensities of his former pupil, without having the power any longer of controlling them, had retired from court to solitude and privacy. However, his retreat did not now protect him; for Nero, either having real testimony against him, or else hating him for his virtues, sent a tribune, to inform him that he was suspected as an accomplice. The tribune found the philosopher at table with Paulina his wife; and having explained his business, Seneca replied, without any emotion, that his welfare depended upon no man; that he had never been accustomed to indulge the errors of the emperor, and would not do it now. When this answer was brought back to Nero, he demanded whether Seneca seemed afraid to die: the tribune replying that he did not appear in the least terrified, "Then go to him again," cried the emperor, "and give him my orders to die."—

Upon

Upon receiving this fatal command, Seneca seemed no way discomposed, but called for his will, in order to make some additions to it, in favour of some friends that were then with him. This favour was refused him; upon which Seneca, turning to his friends, "Since," cried he, "I am not permited to leave you any "other marks of my affection, at least, I leave "you one legacy more precious than all the "rest—my example." Then endeavouring to alleviate their distress, and embracing his wife, the memory of her past affection seemed to melt him into tears. However, no way unmindful of his constancy, he tried to console her for his loss, and exhort her to a life of persevering virtue. But she, resolving not to survive him, pressed her request to die with him so earnestly, that Seneca, who had long looked upon death as a benefit, at last gave his consent, and the veins of both their arms were opened at the same time. As Seneca was old, and much enfeebled by the austerities of his life, the blood flowed but slowly; so that he caused the veins of his legs and thighs to be opened also. His pains were long and violent, but they were not capable of repressing his fortitude or his eloquence. He dictated a discourse to two secretaries, which was read with great avidity after his death by the people, but which has since perished in the wreck of time. His agonies being drawn out to a great length, he at last demanded poison from his physician; but this also failed of its effect, his body being already exhausted, and incapable of promoting its operation. He was then carried into a warm bath, which only served to prolong his end; at length

length he was put into a dry stove, the vapour of which quickly dispatched him. In the mean time, Paulina, having fallen into a swoon with the loss of blood, had her arms bound up by her domestics, and by these means survived her husband for some years; but the remainder of her life shewed she was worthy of having been the wife of Seneca.

The death of Lucan, which happened in the twenty-ninth year of his age, did not detract from his genius or his consanguinity with Seneca. The veins of his arms being opened, after he had lost a great quantity of blood, perceiving his extremities already torpid, while the vital parts still continued warm and vigorous, he called to mind a description in his own poem of the Pharsalia, of a person dying in similar circumstances, and expired while repeating that beautiful passage which begins,

——Nec sicut vulnere sanguis
Emicuit lentus. Ruptis cadit undique venis.

In this manner was the whole city filled with slaughter, and frightful instances of treason. No master was secure from the vengeance of his slaves, nor even parents from baser attempts of their children. Not only throughout Rome, but the whole surrounding country, bodies of soldiers were seen in pursuit of the suspected and the guilty. Whole crowds of wretches, loaded with chains, were led every day to the gates of the palace, to wait their sentence from the tyrant's own lips, who always presided at the tortures in person, attended by Tigellinus, the

most

most abandoned man in Rome, but now become principal minister and favourite.

Nor were the Roman provinces in a better situation than the capitol. The example of the tyrant seemed to influence his governors in every part of the empire. In the seventh year of his reign, the Britons revolted under the conduct of their queen Boadicea. Paulinus, the Roman general, being at that time employed with part of the legions in expelling the Druids from the isle of Anglesea, his lieutenants in his absence committed such barbarities as were quite insupportable. Boadicea, queen of the Iceni, was treated with peculiar indignity, being condemned to be scourged, and her daughters deflowered by the soldiery. In revenge for such flagrant enormities, at the head of a numerous army, she fell upon the Romans wherever they were unprovided, took their forts, destroyed the chief seats of their power at London and Verulam*; and so great was her fury, that seventy thousand Romans perished in this revolt. But the Roman general soon after revenged his countrymen, by a great and decisive battle, in which eighty thousand Britons are said to have perished; and Boadicea herself, rather than fall into the hands of the enraged victor, put an end to her life by poison. This was the last effort the Britons made: from this period they lost not only all hopes, but even all desire of freedom, till the Romans voluntarily withdrew from their coasts.

A war also was carried on against the Parthians, for the greatest part of this reign, con-

* Contiguous to the site of the present St. Albans.

ducted

ducted by Corbulo: who, after many successes, had dispossessed Tiridates, and settled Tigranes in Armenia in his room. Tiridates was soon after restored by an invasion of the Parthians into that country; but being once more opposed by Corbulo; the Romans and Parthians came to an agreement, that Tiridates should continue to govern Armenia, upon condition that he should lay down his crown at the feet of the emperor's statue, and receive it as a gift from him; a ceremony which was readily performed, and afterwards repeated at Rome before Nero himself.

In the twelfth year of this emperor's reign, the Jews also revolted, having been severely oppressed by the Roman governors. It is said that Florus in particular, had carried tyranny to such an outrageous height, that by public proclamation he gave permission to plunder the country, provided he received half the spoil. These oppressions drew such a train of calamities after them, that the sufferings of all other nations were slight in comparison to what this devoted people afterwards endured.

In the mean time, Nero proceeded in his cruelties at Rome, with unabated severity.—Rufius Crispinus, and Annæus Mella, the brother of Seneca, were destroyed upon very slight suspicions. The death of Petronius, about this time, is too remarkable to be passed over in silence. This person, the reputed author of a work, called the Satyricon, which is still remaining, was an Epicurean in principle and practice. In the luxurious court of Nero, he was particularly noted for his refinements in sensuality. Nero had chosen him among the number of his dependents, as the arbiter

of his pleasures;——an office which Tigellinus was desirous solely to enjoy, and therefore resolved upon his destruction. He was accused accordingly of being privy to Piso's conspiracy, and committed to prison. Petronius could not endure the anxiety of suspence, and therefore determined on a voluntary death, which he performed in a manner entirely similar to that in which he had lived. He caused his veins to be opened, and then closed; and again opened at intervals; and with the utmost cheerfulness and tranquillity conversed with his friends, not upon maxims of philosophy, or grave subjects, but upon such topics as had amused his gayest revels. He listened while they recited the lightest poems; and by no action, no word, nor circumstance, evinced his perturbation or regret. Shortly after him, Numicius Thermus was put to death, as likewise Barca Soranus, and Pætus Thrasea. The destroying of the two last, Tacitus calls an attack upon virtue itself. Thrasea died in the midst of his friends and philosophers, conversing and reasoning on the nature of the soul. His wife, who was the daughter of the celebrated Arria, was desirous of following her mother's example, but he dissuaded her from it. The death of the valiant Corbulo, who had gained Nero so many victories over the Parthians, followed next. Nor did the empress Poppæa herself escape, whom, in a fit of anger, he kicked when she was pregnant, in consequence of which she miscarried and died. At length, human nature grew weary of enduring such wrongs, and the whole world seemed to rouse, as if by common consent, to rid the earth of a monster.

The inbred distempers of the empire, which had

had been contracted under the detestable government of four succeeding tyrants, now began to discover themselves in all their malignity, and threatened a general revolution in all the provinces.

Julius Vindex, who commanded the legions in Gaul, was one of the first that publickly protested against the tyrannical government of Nero. He appeared to have no other motive for this revolt than that of freeing the world from an oppressor; for, when it was told him that Nero had set a reward upon his head of ten millions of sesterces, he made this gallant answer, "Who-"ever brings me Nero's head, shall, if he pleases, "have mine." But still more to shew he was not actuated by motives of private ambition, he proclaimed Sergius Galba emperor, and invited him to join in the revolt. This man, at that time governor of Spain, was equally remarkable for his wisdom in peace, and his courage in war But as talents under corrupt princes are always dangerous, for some years he had seemed willing to court obscurity, and avoided all opportunities of signalizing his valour. And now, either through the caution attending old age, or from a total want of ambition, appeared little inclined to join with Vindex, and continued for some time irresolute how to act.

In the mean time, Nero, who had been apprised of the revolt in Gaul, appeared totally regardless of the danger, privately flattering himself that in the event, he would have an opportunity of fresh confiscations. Being then at Naples, he excused himself in his letters to the senate, for not immediately coming to Rome, as he was detained by an hoarseness which he was

afraid of increasing. The care of his voice was still uppermost in his mind, and nothing seemed to give him greater uneasiness than that Vindex, in his manifestoes, should call him a miserable musician. He frequently asked those about him, whether it was possible that one who had studied the art so long and carefully as he had done, should deserve such a degrading epithet.

The circumstances of the revolt growing more formidable every hour, Nero returned to Rome with a mixture of hope, exultation, and revenge. Upon entering the city, he convened a few of his creatures among the senate, and, instead of deliberating on his affairs, entertained them by the exhibition of some musical instruments that were to be played upon by water. He explained to them their mechanism, their advantages, and defects, adding with an ironical air. "that he hoped, with Vindex's permission, to exhibit these instruments upon the theatre."

But when Nero received intelligence of the actual revolt of Galba, he was affected in a very different manner. The reputation of that general was such, that from the moment he declared against him, Nero considered himself as ruined. He received the account as he was at supper, and, instantly struck with terror, overturned the table with his foot, and then fell into a swoon, from which, when he recovered, he tore his clothes, and struck his head, crying out, "that he was utterly undone." It was then that, with frantic rage, he resolved to massacre all the governors of provinces, to destroy all exiles, and to murder all the Gauls in Rome, as a punishment for the treachery of their countrymen. In short, in the wildness of his passions he

he thought of poisoning the whole senate, of burning the city, and turning the lions, kept for the purposes of the theatre, out upon the people. These designs, however, being luckily impracticable, he resolved, at last, to face the danger in person. But his preparations served to mark the infatuation of his mind His principal care was to provide waggons for the convenient carriage of his musical instruments; and to dress out his concubines like Amazons, with whom he intended to face the enemy. He also made a resolution, that if he came off with safety and empire, he would appear again upon the theatre with the lute and water-music, and would equip himself as a pantomime.

Amidst these frivolous, or rather insane, occupations, the revolt became general. Not only the armies in Spain and Gaul, but also the legions in Germany, Africa, and Lusitania, declared against him. Virginius Rufus alone, who commanded an army on the upper Rhine, for a while continued in suspence; during which, his forces, without his order, falling upon the Gauls, routed them with great slaughter, and Vindex slew himself. But this no way advanced the interests of Nero; for he was now become so detestable, that it was infamy to fight in his cause. Of this he was not insensible, and therefore, having furnished himself with poison, as a preparative against the worst, he retired to the Servilian gardens, with a resolution of fleeing into Egypt. He, accordingly, dispatched the freedmen, in whom he had the most confidence, to prepare a fleet at Ostia; and, in the mean while, sounded in person the tribunes and centurions of the guard, to know if they were willing to

share his fortunes. These all excused themselves, under divers pretexts; and one of them had the boldness to answer him by a hemistich from Virgil; *Usque adeone miserum est mori*?*" Thus destitute of every resource, all the expedients that cowardice, revenge, or terror could produce, alternately crowded in his mind. Under the most gloomy apprehensions he went to bed, but waking about midnight, he was surprised to find his guards had left him. The prætorian soldiers, in fact, having been corrupted by their commander, had retired to their camp, and proclaimed Galba emperor. Even those who had received the greatest favours from his hands, now deserted him in his distress, and every door was shut against him.

Wakened to a full sense of his destitute situation, and reduced to despair, he desired that one of his favourite gladiators might come and dispatch him. But even this request there was none found to obey. "Alas," cried he, "have "I neither friend nor enemy!" Then running desperately forth, he seemed resolved to plunge headlong into the Tiber; but his courage beginning to fail him, he made a sudden stop, and asked for a secret place, where he might resume his composure, and meet death with becoming fortitude. In this distress, Phaon, one of his freedmen, offered him his country-house, about four miles distant, where he might, for some time, remain concealed. Nero accepted his offer; and, half dressed as he was, with his head covered, and hiding his face with his handkerchief, he mounted on horseback, attended by

* Is death then so much to be dreaded?

four

four of his domestics, of whom the wretched Sporus was one. Having had a narrow escape from his pursuers, he quitted his horse, and forsaking the high way, entered the thicket that led towards the back part of Phaon's house, through which he crept, among the reeds and brambles, with which the place was overgrown. While he was waiting till a breach should be made in the wall for him to enter, he took up some water in the hollow of his hand, from a pool to drink, saying, "These are the delicacies "of Nero." During this interval, the senate finding the Prætorian guards had taken part with Galba, declared him emperor, and condemned Nero to die, MORE MAJORUM.

These dreadful tidings were quickly brought by one of Phaon's slaves from the city, while Nero continued lingering between his hopes and his fears. At one time, this most wretched of all mankind was employed in providing stones for his own tomb; at another, in preparing wood and water for his funeral: now repeating verses, expressive of the horrors of his mind; again giving vent to his tears, and crying out, "What an "artist is the world likely to lose!" When he understood that, in conformity to the words of his sentence, he was to be stripped naked, his head to be fixed in a pillory, and he, in that posture, to be scourged to death, Nero was so terrified, that he seized two poniards, which he had brought with him, and, after examining their points, returned them to their sheaths, pretending that the fatal moment was not yet arrived. He then desired Sporus to begin the lamentations which were used at funerals; he next intreated that some one of his attendants would

would die, to give him courage by his example; and afterwards began to reproach his own cowardice, crying out, "Does this become "Nero? Is this trifling well timed? No, no, "let me be courageous." In fact, he had no time to spare: his pursuers were just at hand, and on hearing the sound of the horses' feet, he set a dagger to his throat, with which, by the assistance of Epaphroditus, his freedman and secretary, he gave himself a mortal wound. One of the centurions entering the room, whilst he was yet alive, and pretending he came to his relief, attempted to stop the blood with his cloak. But Nero, regarding him with a stern countenance, said, "It is now too late; and almost instantly expired, in the thirty-second year of his age, after a reign of somewhat more than thirteen years and a half, the greatest part of which he had been a scourge to his people, and a disgrace to human nature. In him ended the line of the Cæsars; and the joy which pervaded the city on his death, was expressed by every token that such a signal deliverance could suggest.

CHAP.

CHAP XVI.

The Reigns of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius.

SERVIUS GALBA* was no less than seventy-two years old when declared emperor, and was then in Spain with his legions. Upon his first nomination, he met with so many disquietudes, that he once meditated suicide. But hearing from Rome, that Nero was dead, and the empire transferred to him by the senate, as it had previously been by the army, he immediately assumed the title and ensigns of command. In his journey towards Rome he was met by Virginius Rufus, who, finding the senate had decreed him the government, came to yield him obedience. This general had more than once refused the empire himself, which was offered him by his soldiers, alleging, that the conscript fathers alone had the disposal of it, and from them only he would accept the honour; but this generous forbearance did not ingratiate him with the new emperor. Shortly after this, many of those who were most distinguished in the last reign, and who attempted to disturb the present, were cut off. Among these were Nymphidius Sabinus, præfect

A. D. 69.

U. C. 819.

* Galba, by the father's side, was descended from the Sulpitian family, one of the most illustrious in Rome. When a young man, Augustus, on a certain occasion, put his hand on his head, and said, "You, my son, will have "a trial at the empire."

of

of the prætorian guards at Rome, who had presumed to be a competitor with Galba; Fonteius Capito, lieutenant in Germany; and Clodius Macer, pro-consul in Africa.

Galba, though raised to the empire by his army, was anxious to suppress their power, lest they should be encouraged to commit future disturbances. His first approach to Rome was attended with one of those rigorous strokes of justice, which may rather be defended than admired. A body of mariners, whom Nero had taken from the oar, and enlisted among the legions, went to meet the emperor, three miles from the city, and with loud importunities demanded a confirmation of what his predecessor had done in their favour. Galba, who was rigidly attached to the ancient discipline, deferred their request to another time. But they, considering this delay as equivalent to an absolute denial, insisted upon their request, in a very disrespectful manner; and some of them even had recourse to arms: on which Galba ordered a body of horse attending him to ride in among them, and thus killed seven thousand of them on the spot, and afterwards decimated the survivors. Their insolence demanded correction; but such excessive punishments deviated into cruelty. His next step to curb the insolence of the soldiers, was his discharging the German cohort, which had been established by the former emperors as a body guard. Those he sent home to their own country, unrewarded, under the pretence that they were disaffected to his person.

Two objects seem early to have engaged his attention, namely, to punish those vices which had come to an enormous height in the last

reign,

reign, with the strictest severity; and to replenish the treasury, which had been entirely drained by the prodigality of his predecessors. These attempts, however commendable, only brought on him the imputation of severity and avarice: the state was too much corrupted to admit of such an immediate transition from vice to virtue, as this worthy, but weak, politician attempted to effect. The people had long been maintained in sloth and luxury by the prodigality of the former emperors, and could not think of being obliged to seek for subsistence by labour and frugality. They began, therefore, to satirise the old man, and turn the simplicity of his manners into ridicule. It is recorded of him, that he groaned upon having an expensive soup served up at his table; that he presented to his steward, for his fidelity, a plate of beans; and that a famous player upon the flute, named Canus, having greatly delighted him, he drew out his purse, and gave him five-pence, telling him that it was private and not public money. By such ill-judged parsimony at such a time, Galba speedily began to lose his popularity; and he, who before his accession was esteemed by all, was now considered with ridicule and contempt.

The love of money, indeed, seems to have been stronger in Galba than the sense of justice. Shortly after his coming to Rome, the people were presented with a most grateful spectacle; which was that of Locusta, Elius, Polycletus, Patronius, and Petinus, all the bloody ministers of Nero's cruelty, drawn in fetters through the city and publicly executed. But Tigellinus, the most notorious offender of all, was not there.

This

This crafty villain had purchased his safety, by the sacrifice of his wealth; and though the people cried out for vengeance against him, the emperor granted him both life and pardon. Helotus the eunuch also, who had been the instrument of poisoning Claudius, escaped likewise by the proper application of his wealth.

It should be remarked, however, that avarice was rather the vice of his confidents than of Galba. The principal of these were Titus Venius, who had been his lieutenant in Spain, a man of insatiable cupidity; Caius Laco, whom he had made præfect of the prætorian bands, and Icelus, his freedman who aspired at the highest command in the equestrian order. These three, very different in their dispositions, influenced the emperor to opposite pursuits; and only agreed in one point, that of abusing his confidence. Thus, by the inequality of his conduct, according to the impulse that was given him, he became despicable to his subjects. At one time, shewing himself severe and frugal; at another, remiss and prodigal; condemning some illustrious persons without hearing; and pardoning others, though guilty. In short, through the mediation of these favourites, all officers were venal, and all punishments redeemable by money.

Such was the posture of affairs at Rome, while the provinces were yet in a worse condition. The success of the army in Spain in choosing an emperor, induced the legions in other parts to wish for a similar opportunity. Accordingly, many seditions were kindled, and several factions promoted in different parts of the empire, but particularly in Germany. In that country were then two Roman armies; the

the one, which had lately attempted to make Rufus Virginius emperor, and which was now commanded by his lieutenant; the other, commanded by Vitellius, who long had an ambition to obtain the empire for himself. The former of these armies, despising their present general, and considering themselves as suspected by the emperor, for having been the last to acknowledge his title, resolved to be foremost in denying it. When they were summoned to take the oaths of homage and fidelity, they refused to acknowledge any commands but those of the senate, or to acquiesce in the election of an emperor created in Spain.

Galba, being informed of these commotions, was sensible, that beside his years, he was less respected for want of an heir. He resolved therefore, to adopt some person, whose virtues might deserve such advancement, and protect his declining age from danger. Otho made warm application for himself; alledging the great services he had done the emperor, as being the first man of note who came to his assistance, when he had declared against Nero. However, Galba, on this occasion, determined neither to be biassed by partiality nor influence, but to consult the public good alone, and therefore, on a day appointed, ordered Piso Licinianus to attend him. The character given by historians of Piso, is, that he was every way worthy of the honour designed. He was no way related to Galba, and had no other interest but merit to recommend him to his favour. Taking this youth, therefore by the hand, in the presence of his friends, he adopted him to

succeed him in the empire, giving him the most wholesome lessons for guiding his future conduct. Piso's conduct shewed that he was highly deserving of this distinction: in all his deportment there appeared such modesty, firmness, and equality of mind, as bespoke him rather capable of discharging, than ambitious of obtaining, his present dignity. But the army and the senate did not seem equally disinterested upon this occasion; they had been so long used to bribery and corruption, that they expected every new claimant for power, first to satisfy their avarice. The adoption, therefore, of Piso, was but coldly received; for his virtues were no recommendation without being set off by wealth and liberality.

Otho, finding his hopes of adoption wholly frustrated, resolved upon obtaining the empire by force. In fact, his circumstances were so very desperate, that he was heard to say, "it was equal to him whether he fell by his enemies in the field, or by his creditors in the city." He therefore raised a moderate sum of money, by selling his interest to a person who wanted a place; and with this bribed two subaltern officers in the prætorian bands; supplying the deficiency of his largesses by liberal promises and plausible pretences. Having in this manner, in less than eight days corrupted the fidelity of the soldiers, he stole secretly from the emperor, while he was sacrificing; and assembling his troops, in a short speech, urged the cruelties and the avarice of Galba. Finding his invectives received with universal shouts by the army, he entirely threw off the mask, and avowed his intentions of dethroning him. The soldiers being ripe

ripe for sedition, immediately seconded his views, and taking Otho upon their shoulders, declared him emperor; and, to strike terror into the citizens, if they should incline to be refractory, carried him with their swords drawn into the camp.

Galba being informed of the revolt of the army, seemed utterly confounded, and continued wavering and doubtful; till, at last, being deluded by a false report of Otho's being slain, he rode into the forum in complete armour, attended by many of his followers. Just at the same instant, a body of horse, sent from the camp to destroy him, entered on the opposite side; and each party prepared for the encounter. For some time hostilities were suspended on each side; Galba being confused and irresolute, and his antagonists struck with horror at the baseness of their enterprise. At length finding the emperor in some measure deserted by his adherents, they rushed in upon him, trampling the crowds of people that then filled the forum under foot. Galba, seeing them approach, seemed to recollect all his former fortitude; and bending his head forward, bid the assassin strike it off, if it were for the good of the people. This was quickly performed, and his head being set upon the point of a lance, was presented to Otho, who ordered it to be contemptuously carried round the camp; his body remaining in the streets, till it was buried by one of his slaves. He died in the seventy-third year of his age, after a short reign of seven months; as illustrious by his native virtue, as it was contaminated by the vices of his favourites, who shared in his downfal. Of Galba, it has in-

deed been said with justice, that had he never mounted a throne, he would always have been believed eminently qualified to fill one.

A. D. 69. No sooner was Galba thus murdered, than the senate and people ran in crowds to the camp, contending who should be foremost in extolling the virtues of the new emperor, and villifying the character of his predecessor. Otho finding himself surrounded by congratulating multitudes, immediately repaired to the senate, where he received the titles usually given to the emperors; and thence returned to the palace, seemingly resolved to reform his life, and assume manners becoming the elevated station to which he was raised.

He began his reign by a singular instance of clemency, in pardoning Marius Celsus, who had been highly favoured by Galba; and not only forgave but even advanced him to the highest honours; asserting that "fidelity deserved every reward." This act of clemency was followed by another of justice, equally agreeable to the people. Tigellinus, Nero's favourite, who had been the promoter of all his cruelties, was now put to death; and all who had been unjustly banished, or stripped, at his instigation, during Nero's reign, were restored to their country and their rights.

But whatever virtues Otho might have displayed in government, had he been allowed opportunity, he was almost immediately called off to other concerns. The legions in Lower Germany, having been purchased by the large gifts and specious promises of Vitellius their general, were at length induced to proclaim him emperor; and regardless of the senate, they declared that they had

had an equal right to appoint to that high station, with the cohorts at Rome. The news of this conduct in the army, soon spread consternation throughout the city; but Otho was particularly affected, as he foresaw that nothing but the blood of his countrymen could decide a contest, of which his own ambition alone was the cause. Of all characters in history, Otho's seems the only one which was mended by advancement: in a private station he was weak, vicious, and debauched; but as emperor, he appears courageous, benevolent, and humane: to avoid bloodshed, he wished to come to an agreement with Vitellius; but this not succeeding, both sides began their preparations for war. News being received that Vitellius was upon his march to Italy, Otho departed from Rome with a vast army to oppose him; but though he was powerful in numbers, his men had been little used to war, and were less to be relied on. He seemed, indeed, by his behaviour, to have been sensible of the disproportion of the forces; and is said to have been tortured with frightful dreams, and the most dismal apprehensions. However, he proceeded with a great show of courage, till he arrived at the city of Brixellum, on the river Po, where he halted; sending his forces before him, under the conduct of his generals Suetonius and Celsus. The army of Vitellius, which consisted of seventy thousand men, was commanded by his generals Valens and Cecina, he himself remaining in Gaul, to bring up the rest of his forces. Both sides displayed such ardour and animosity that they quickly met; and three considerable battles were fought in the space of three days: one near Pla-

centia, another near Cremona, and a third, at a place called Castor; in all which, Otho and the Romans had the advantage. But these successes were of short continuance; for, Valens and Cecina, who had hitherto acted separately, joining their forces, and recruiting their armies with fresh supplies, resolved to come to a general engagement. Otho, who by this time had joined his army, at a little village called Bebriacum, finding the enemy, notwithstanding their late losses, inclined to come to a battle, called a council of war to determine upon the proper measures to be taken. The predominant opinion, in contradiction to wisdom and experience, was to hazard an immediate engagement. In this Otho acquiesced: he had been for some time so uneasy under the war, that he was willing to exchange suspense for danger. However, he was so surrounded by flatterers, that he was prohibited from being personally present in the engagement, but prevailed upon to reserve himself for the fortune of the empire, and wait the event at Brixellum. A terrible battle soon took place at Bebriacum, where Otho's troops had the advantage, at the first onset, slew all the foremost rank, and won the eagle. At length, however, the superior discipline of the legions of Vitellius turned the fortune of the day. After some time, they formed themselves from a state of apparent confusion, and attacking the enemy in flank, gained a signal and decisive victory. Otho's army fled in great confusion towards Bebriacum, being pursued with great slaughter all the way.

In the mean time, Otho waited for the news of the battle with great impatience, and seemed

to tax his messengers with delay. The first account of his defeat was brought him by a common soldier who had escaped from the field. The wretched emperor, still surrounded by flatterers, was desired to give no credit to a base fugitive, who was guilty of falsehood, only to cover his own cowardice. The soldier, however, persisted in the veracity of his report; and, finding none inclined to believe him, fell upon his sword, and expired at the emperor's feet. Otho was deeply affected with the death of this faithful sentinel; and cried out, that he would cause the ruin of no more such valiant and worthy soldiers, but would end the contest the shortest way. It was in vain, that his followers gathered round him, endeavouring to revive his hopes, and inspire him with fresh ambition; in vain did those, who were too distant to be heard, lift up their hands to beseech him; he was deaf to all their intreaties; he had formed a resolution to die, as the only means of ridding himself of his cares, and his country of its calamities. Having, therefore, given the signal for speaking, he addressed the shattered remains of his army with great intrepidity: "I esteem," cried he, "this "day, as far more glorious than that of my "election, since it has convinced me of your "fidelity and affection. I must, however, entreat for one favour more; which is, to die, in "order to procure your safety: I can never so "much advance the interests of my country by "war and blood, as by sacrificing myself for its "peace. Others have purchased fame by governing well: let it be my boast to leave an "empire, rather than, by my ambition, to "weaken

" weaken or destroy it." After speaking to this effect, he entreated his followers to yield themselves to Vitellius, and not provoke him by obstinacy or delay. Then rebuking the unreasonable fears of those about him, without any signs of fear, either in his looks or words, he retired to his chamber; where he wrote two consolatory letters to his sister, and a third to Messalina, whom he had designed for his wife. He next burnt such letters and papers as might be prejudicial to his dependents, and distributed some money and jewels among his friends and domestics. He then prepared to die; but perceiving a tumult among the soldiers, who prepared to punish some that were going privately away, he cried out, " Let me then add then one " day more to my life." Upon which he ordered his chamber-door to be thrown open, and employed the remaining part of the day in checking the violence of his soldiers, and giving advice to all such as desired admittance. Having thus performed the duties of his station, and quenched his thirst with a draught of cold water, he ordered the doors to be secured, and fell into a profound sleep. Awaking by break of day, he perceived one of his servants remaining in the room, whom he commanded to retire. Then taking a dagger, which he had placed under his pillow the night before, he gave himself a mortal blow on the left side, and with a single groan, ended his life, after a short reign of three months and five days. Though the means by which he acquired dominion deserve reprobation, there is something in his after-conduct that makes us lament his end. A man who could think so justly and feel so acutely on this occasion, deserved to have been longer tried.

No

No sooner was it known that Otho had killed himself, than all the soldiers repaired to Virginius, the commander of the German legions, earnestly entreating him to assume the reins of government; or, at least, entreating his mediation with the generals of Vitellius in their favour. Upon his declining their requests, Rubrius Gallus, a person of considerable note, immediately undertook their embassy to the generals of the conquering army, and soon after obtained pardon for all the adherents of Otho.

Vitellius being thus supported by a victorious army, the senate made no hesitation in proclaiming him emperor, though he was still in Gaul. At this time Italy was harassed by the soldiers, who committed outrages, exceeding all the oppressions of the most calamitous war. The emperor, before he set out for Rome, determined to punish the prætorian cohorts, who had been the instruments of the late disturbances in the state. He caused them all to be disarmed, and deprived of the name and honour of soldiers; and sentenced an hundred and fifty of the most guilty, to be put to death.

These beginnings were soon shaded by his vices and extravagance. As he approached towards Rome, he affected all imaginable splendour; and kept up neither order nor discipline among his soldiers; for they plundered wherever they came with impunity. Upon his arrival on the field where the battle was fought, which put him in possession of the empire, observing the great number of dead bodies scattered over the plain, men and horses confusedly intermixed, putrefying and tainting the air

air with their stench, he seemed no way shocked at the spectacle: but with a brutal apathy, remarked to those about him, "that a dead enemy smelt well;" and then calling for wine, he drank upon the spot, and ordered large quantities to be distributed among his soldiers.

Having reached Rome, he entered it, not as a place he came to govern with justice, but as a town that was become his own by the laws of conquest. He marched through the streets, mounted on horseback, all in armour, the senate and people preceding him on foot as if the captives of his late victory. Next day he made a speech before the senate, in which he magnified his own actions, and promised them extraordinary advantages from his administration. He then harangued the people, and met with the customary adulation.

In the mean time, his soldiers being permitted to satiate themselves in the debaucheries of the city, grew totally unfit for war. The principal affairs of the state were managed by the lowest wretches, whom fortune, in her capricious freaks, seemed pleased with exalting. Asiaticus, his freedman, supported by a groupe of players and charioteers, governed all things, and brought virtue into disrepute by vicious example. Vitellius, more abandoned than they, gave himself up to all kinds of luxury and profuseness; but gluttony was his predominant vice, insomuch that he brought himself to an habit of vomiting, in order to be able to renew his meals at pleasure. His entertainments were prodigiously expensive; but they were more frequently at the cost of others than his own. The most memorable of these banquets, was that which was

made

made for him by his brother, on his arrival at Rome. In this were served up two thousand several dishes of fish, and seven thousand fowl of the most valuable kinds. But in one particular dish he seemed to have outdone all the former profusion of the most luxurious Romans. This was of such magnitude as to be called the shield of Minerva, and was filled with an olio made from the sounds of the fish called scarri, the brains of pheasants and woodcocks, the tongues of the most costly birds, and the spawn of lampreys brought from the Carpathian sea.

In this manner did this beastly glutton proceed, spending his time in the most gross sensualities: so that if he had reigned long, the whole empire would not have been sufficient to have maintained his table. All the attendants of his court sought to raise themselves, not by their virtue or abilities, but the sumptuousness of their entertainments. This prodigality soon produced its attendant, want; and that, in turn, gave rise to cruelty and rapine.

Those who had formerly been his associates, were now destroyed without mercy. Going to visit one of them in a violent fever, he mingled poison with his water, and delivered it to him with his own hands, in order to obtain his fortune. He never pardoned money-lenders who presumed to demand payment of his former debts; and thus cancelled old claims, by taking both the life and property of the applicant. A Roman knight being dragged away to execution, and crying out, that he had made the emperor his heir, Vitellius demanded to see the will, where finding himself joint inheritor with another, he ordered both to be executed, that he might enjoy the legacy without a partner.

By

By the incessant repetition of such vices and cruelties as these, he became not only a burthen to himself, but odious to all mankind. The astrologers, with no vain foresight, now began to prognosticate his downfall. A writing was set up in the forum to this effect: "We, in the name "of the ancient Chaldeans, gave Vitellius warn-"ing to depart this life by the calends of Oc-"tober." This intimation filled him with terror, and he ordered all the astrologers to be banished from Rome. An old woman, having predicted, that if he survived his mother, he should reign many years in happiness and security, he immediately caused her death, by refusing her sustenance, under pretence of its being prejudcial to her health. But he soon saw the futility of relying upon such vain prognostications; for his soldiers, by their cruelty and rapine, having become insupportable to the inhabitants of Rome, the legions of the East, who had at first acquiesced in his dominion, began to revolt; and shortly after, unanimously resolved to raise Vespasian to the throne.

Vespasian, long since appointed general against the rebellious Jews, had reduced most of their country, except Jerusalem, to subjection. The death of Nero, however, and the succession of Galba, gave a temporary check to his conquests, as he was obliged to send his son Titus to Rome, to receive that emperor's commands. Galba too being speedily cut off, he resolved to continue neuter, during the civil wars between Otho and Vitellius; and when the latter prevailed, he paid him his homage with reluctance. Desirous of acquiring reputation, though he disliked the government, he determined to lay siege to

Jerusalem

Jerusalem, and actually made preparations for that great undertaking, when he learned that Vitellius was held in universal detestation. These murmurings increased and spread wider every day; whilst Vespasian secretly endeavoured to inflame the discontents of his army. They began, at length, to fix their eyes on him as a person most capable and willing to support the honour of his country, and put a period to its injuries. Not only the legions under his command, but those in Mæsia and Pannonia came to the same resolution, of declaring themselves for Vespasian. He was, without his knowledge, proclaimed emperor at Alexandria, the army there confirming their suffrages with extraordinary applause. Still, however, Vespasian seemed to decline the honours done him; till at length his soldiers compelled him, by threats of immediate death, to accept a title, which, in all probability, he wished to enjoy. He now called a council of war, in which it was resolved, that his son Titus should be left to carry one the war against the Jews; and that Mutianus, one of his generals, with the greatest part of his legions, should enter Italy; while Vespasian himself was to levy forces in all parts of the East, in order to reinforce them, in case of necessity.

Vitellius, though buried in sloth and luxury, on hearing of these machinations, resolved to make an effort to defend his power, and ordered his chief commanders, Valens and Cecina, to make all possible preparations to resist the invaders. The first army that entered Italy with an hostile intention, was under the command of Antonius Primus, who was met by Cecina near

Cremona. A parley taking place, Cecina was prevailed upon to change sides, and declare for Vespasian. His army, however, quickly repented of their tergivisation, imprisoned their general, and attacked Antonius, though without a leader. The engagement continued during the whole night; and in the morning, after a short repast, both armies renewed the combat; when the soldiers of Antonius saluting the rising sun, according to custom, the Vitellians, supposing that they had received new reinforcements, betook themselves to flight, with the loss of thirty thousand men. Shortly after, liberating their general Cecina from prison, they importuned him to intercede with the conquerors for pardon; which they obtained, though not without the most horrid barbarities committed upon the citizens of Cremona, to which they had retired for shelter.

Meanwhile Vitellius, who was wallowing in all kinds of luxury and excess, being informed of the defeat of his army, his former insolence sunk into the extreme of timidity and irresolution. At length, rousing from his lethargy, he made several efforts to ward off the impending ruin; but his luxury and dissipation continuing, his affairs became more desperate every day; till, at last, he made offers to Vespasian of resigning the empire, provided his life were spared, and a sufficient revenue allotted for his support. To enforce this request, he issued from his palace in deep mourning, with all his domestics weeping round him. He then went to offer the sword of justice to Cecilius, the consul; which he refusing, the abject emperor prepared to lay down the ensigns of empire in the temple of Concord. But being interrupted by some, who

who cried out, "that himself was Concord," he resolved, upon so weak an encouragement, still to maintain his power, and immediately prepared for his defence.

Amid this fluctuation of counsels, Sabinus, the brother of Vespasian, seized upon the capitol. But, he was premature in his attempt; for the soldiers of Vitellius attacked him with great fury; and prevailing by their numbers, soon laid that beautiful fabric in ashes. During this dreadful conflagration, Vitellius was feasting in the palace of Tiberius, and beholding all the horrors of the assault with great satisfaction. Sabinus was taken prisoner; and shortly after executed by the emperor's command.—Young Domitian, his nephew, who was afterwards emperor, saved himself by flight, in the habit of a priest; and all the rest who escaped the fire, were put to the sword.

But this transient gleam of success served little to improve the general affairs of Vitellius: for Antonius, the general of Vespasian, was rapidly advancing towards Rome, and would not listen to any accommodation. When he arrived before the walls of the city, the forces of Vitellius resolved upon defending it to the utmost extremity. It was attacked on three sides with the utmost fury; while the army within, sallying upon the besiegers, defended it with equal obstinacy. The battle lasted a whole day; till, at last, the besieged were driven into the city, and a dreadful slaughter commenced in all the streets, which they vainly attempted to defend. In the mean time, the citizens stood by, like indifferent spectators; and, as if they had been in a theatre, clapped their hands, encouraging one party, and then the other. As either turned their backs

the citizens would sally out from their places of refuge, and kill and plunder them without mercy. But what was still more remarkable, during these dreadful slaughters, both within and without the city, the people could not be prevented from celebrating one of their most riotous feasts, called the Saturnalia: so that at one time might have been seen a strange mixture of mirth and misery; of cruelty and lewdness; in one place, buryngs and slaughters; in another, drunkenness and feasting; here streams of blood, and heaps of mangled bodies; there lewd debaucheries and shameless prostitution: in a word, all the horrors of a civil war, and all the licentiousness of the most abandoned security.

During this complicated scene of misery and profligacy, Vitellius retired privately to his wife's house, upon Mount Aventine, designing, that night, to flee to the army commanded by his brother at Tarracina. But, quite incapable, through fear, of maintaining any resolution, he changed his mind, and returned again to his palace, now void and desolate; all his slaves forsaking him in his distress, and purposely avoiding his presence.—There, after wandering for some time, quite disconsolate, and fearing the face of every creature, he hid himself in an obscure corner; from which, however, he was soon taken by a party of the conquering soldiers. Still anxous to protract his miserable life, he begged to be kept in prison till the arrival of Vespasian at Rome, pretending that he had secrets of importance to discover. But his intreaties were in vain: the soldiers, binding his hands behind him, and throwing a halter round his neck, led him along, half naked, into the public forum; load-

ing him, as they proceeded, with the most bitter reproaches which their malice could suggest, or his cruelty deserve. Some cast dirt and filth upon him as he passed; others struck him with their hands; some ridiculed the defects of his person, his red fiery face, and the protuberance of his belly. At length, being come to the place of punishment, they killed him with many blows; and then dragging the dead body through the streets with a hook, they threw it, with all possible ignomy, into the Tiber.

Such was the merited end of the brutal Vitellius, in the fifty-seventh year of his age, after a short reign of eight months and five days; begun in cruelty, and continued with universal detestation. Fortunately for mankind, the career of this monster was soon run. Indeed, the three last emperors had only appeared like sovereigns in a tragedy, "to strut their hour upon the "stage, and then be seen no more."

CHAP. XVII.

The Reigns of Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian.

A.D. 70. U.C. 820. VITELLIUS being dispatched, the conquering army pursued the enemy throughout the whole city, while neither houses nor temples afforded refuge to the fugitives. Not only armed foes, however, suffered in this manner; but many of the citizens, who were obnoxious to the soldiers, were dragged from their houses, and killed without any form of trial; and no sooner was their fury somewhat abated, than they began to seek for plunder, under pretence of searching for the enemy. The lower rabble and the slaves joined in these detestable outrages; and the whole city was filled with outcry and lamentation, as if it had fallen a prey to the most merciless invaders.

At length, upon the arrival of Mutianus, general to Vespasian, slaughter and rapine ceased, and the city began to resume an appearance of tranquillity. Vespasian * was declared emperor, by the unanimous consent of the seneate and the army; and dignified with all those titles, which now followed rather the power than the merit of those who were appointed to govern. Messengers were dispatched to

* The Flavian family, from which Vespasian was sprung, was neither conspicuous for its lustre nor its antiquity. They were originally of Reate, in the country of the Sabines.

him in Egypt, desiring his return, and testifying the utmost desire for his government. But the winter being dangerous for sailing, he deferred his voyage to a more convenient season. Perhaps, also, the dissensions in other parts of the empire, retarded his return to Rome: for Claudius Civilis, in Lower Germany, excited his countrymen to revolt; and destroyed the Roman garrisons, in different parts of that province. Flushed with success, he aspired to the purple himself. and boldly advanced to give Cerealis, Vespasian's general, battle. In the beginning of this engagement he seemed successful, breaking the Roman legions, and putting their cavalry to flight. But at length Cerealis, turned the fate of the day, and not only routed the enemy, but took and destroyed their camp. This engagement, however, was not decisive; several others ensued with doubtful success; and an accommodation at length determined what arms could not effect. Civilis obtained peace for his countrymen, and pardon for himself; that they might form a barrier against the incursions of the surrounding barbarous nations.

During these commotions in Germany, the Sarmatians, a savage people to the north-east of the empire, suddenly passed the river Ister; and marching into the Roman dominions with celerity and fury, destroyed several garrisons, and an army under the command of Fonteius Agrippa. However, they were driven back, with some slaughter, by Rubrius Gallus, Vespasian's lieutenant, into their native forests; where several attempts were made to confine them by garrisons and forts, placed along the

confines

confines of their country. But these hardy nations, having once found the way into the empire, never after desisted from invading it at every opportunity: till, they finally over-ran and destroyed the glory of Rome.

Vespasian continued some months at Alexandria, in Egypt, where, it is said, he performed miracles in curing a blind and a lame man, by touching them. Before he set out for Rome, he gave his son Titus the command of the army that was to lay siege to Jerusalem. As he approached the metropolis, he was met at the distance of many miles by the senate, and half the inhabitants, who gave the sincerest testimonies of their joy, in having an emperor of such great and experienced virtues. Nor did he, in the least, disappoint their expectations; being equally prompt to reward merit, and to pardon his adversaries; to reform the manners of the citizens, and set them the best example in his own.

While his father was thus receiving the homage of his subjects, Titus carried on the war against the Jews with vigour. This obstinate and infatuated people had long resolved to resist the Roman power, vainly hoping to find protection from Heaven, whom their impieties had utterly offended. Their own historian represents them, as arrived at the highest pitch of iniquity; while famines, earthquakes, and prodigies, all conspired to forbode their approaching ruin, and to fulfil the predictions of our Saviour and the prophets. Nor was it sufficient that Heaven and earth seemed to combine against them: they had the most bitter dissensions among themselves; and were split into two parties, who robbed and destroyed each other without mercy, while both

at

at the same time, boasted their zeal for the religion of their ancestors.

At the head of one of those parties was an incendiary, whose name was John. This fanatic affected sovereign power, and filled the whole city of Jerusalem, and all the towns around, with tumult and pillage. In a short time, a new faction arose, headed by one Simon, who gathering together multitudes of robbers and murderers, who had fled to the mountains, attacked many cities and towns, and reduced all Idumea under his power. Jerusalem, at length, became the theatre in which these two demagogues began to exercise their mutual animosity; John was possessed of the temple, while Simon was admitted into the city; both equally enraged against each other; while slaughter and devestation followed their pretensions.

Jerusalem was in this miserable situation when Titus came to sit down before it with his conquering army, and began his operations within about six furlongs of the place. It was at the feast of the passover, when the place was filled with an infinite multitude of people, who had come from all parts to celebrate that great solemnity, that Titus undertook the siege. His presence produced a temporary reconciliation between the contending factions within; so that they unanimously resolved to oppose the common enemy first, and then decide their domestic quarrels. Their first sally, which was made with much fury and resolution, put the Romans into great disorder, and obliged them to abandon their camp, and flee to the mountains. However, rallying immediately after, the Jews were forced back into the city; while Titus, in person, shewed surprising feats of valour and conduct.

Jerusalem,

Jerusalem was strongly fortified by three walls, on every side, except where it was fenced by deep valleys. Titus began by battering down the outward wall, which with much fatigue and danger he effected; all the time shewing the greatest clemency to the Jews, and offering them repeated assurances of pardon, on submission. But this infatuated nation refused his kindness with contempt, and imputed his humanity to his fears. Five days after the commencement of the siege, Titus broke through the second wall; and he soon after made preparations for battering the third wall, which was their last defence. But first he sent Josephus, their countryman, into the city to exhort them to yield, who using all his eloquence to persuade them, was only reviled with scoffs and reproaches. The siege was therefore carried on with greater vigour than before; and several batteries for engines were raised, which were no sooner built, than destroyed by the Jews. At length, it was resolved in council, to surround the whole city with a trench, and thus prevent all relief and succours from abroad. This, which was quickly executed, had no effect to intimidate the citizens. Though famine and pestilence, its necessary attendants, began now to make the most horrid ravages within the walls, yet this desperate people still resolved to hold out. Though obliged to live upon the most scanty and unwholesome food; though a bushel of corn was sold for six hundred crowns; and the holes and sewers were ransacked for carcases, that had long since grown putrid; yet they were not to be moved. The famine raged, at last, to such an excess, that a woman of distinction in the city boiled her own child, and eat it. When this horrid account came to the ears of Titus, he declared that

he

he would bury so abominable a crime in the ruins of their state. In this resolution, he cut down all the woods within a considerable distance of the city, and causing more batteries to be raised, at length battered down the wall, and in five days entered the citadel by force. Thus reduced to the very verge of ruin, the remaining Jews still deceived themselves with absurd and delusive expectations, while many false prophets imposed upon the multitude, declaring they should soon have assistance from God. The heat of the battle was now gathered round the inner wall of the temple, while the defendants desperately combated from the top. Titus was anxious to save this beautiful structure; but a soldier casting a brand into some adjacent buildings, the fire communicated to the temple; and, notwithstanding the utmost endeavours on both sides, the whole edifice was quickly consumed. The sight of the temple in ruins effectually damped the ardour of the Jews. They began to perceive, that Heaven had forsaken them, while their cries and lamentations re-echoed from the adjacent mountains. The more resolute, however, still endeavoured to defend the upper and stronger part of the city, named Sion; but Titus, with his battering engines, soon made himself entire master of the place. John and Simon were taken from the vaults, where they had concealed themselves: the former was condemned to perpetual imprisonment; and the latter reserved to grace the conqueror's triumph. The greatest part of the populace were put to the sword; and the city was entirely rased by the plough; so that, according to our Saviour's prophecy, not one stone remained upon another.

Thus, after a siege of six months, Jerusalem was totally destroyed, having flourished, under the peculiar direction of Heaven, above two thousand years. The numbers who perished in the siege, according to Josephus, amounted to above a million of souls, and the captives to almost a hundred thousand. The temporal state of the Jews ended with their city; while the wretched survivors were banished, sold, and dispersed into all parts of the world, where they have ever since remained, in their posterity, a monument of the divine wrath, and an evidence of the truth of Revelation.

All ranks were zealous in bestowing due honours on Titus, many of which he modestly declined. But his return in triumph, in which he accompanied his father, was marked with all the magnificence and joy that was in the power of men to express. Every thing esteemed valuable or beautiful was collected to adorn this great solemnity. Among the rich spoils were exposed vast quantities of gold, taken out of the temple; but the Book of the Holy Law was not the least remarkable part in this grand exhibition. This was the first time that ever Rome saw the father and the son triumph together. A triumphal arch was erected upon this occasion, on which were described all the victories of Titus over the Jews, and which remains almost entire to this day. Vespasian likewise built a temple to Peace, in which were deposited most of the Jewish spoils; and having now calmed all commotions in every part of the empire, he shut up the temple of Janus*.

* The temple of Janus was shut in peace, and open in war. During the reign of Augustus it was twice shut; a circumstance remarkable in the history of a nation that was almost incessantly at war in one quarter of the globe or another.

Having

Having thus given security and peace to the empire, the emperor now resolved to correct numberless abuses which had grown up under the tyranny of his predecessors. To effect this with more facility, he joined Titus with him in the consulship and the tribunitial power; and, in some measure, admitted him a partner in all the highest offices of the state. He began with restraining the licentiousness of the army, and bringing them back to their pristine discipline. He ordered a young officer to be broke for being perfumed, declaring he had rather he had stunk of garlic. Some military messengers desiring money to buy shoes, he ordered them, for the future, to perform their journies barefoot. He was not less strict with regard to the senators and the knights. He degraded such as were a disgrace to their station, and supplied their places with the most worthy men he could find. He abridged the processes that had been carried to an unreasonable length in the courts of justice. He took care to re-build such parts of the city as had suffered in the late commotions; particularly the Capitol, which he restored to more than former magnificence. He likewise built a famous amphitheatre, the ruins of which are, to this day, an evidence of its ancient grandeur. The other cities in the empire also shared his paternal care; he improved such as were declining, adorned others, and built many a-new. In such acts as these, he passed a long reign of clemency and moderation, of justice and equity.

Julius Sabinus seems to have been the only person who was treated with aggravated cruelty. This person was commander of a small army in Gaul, and had declared himself emperor upon the death

of Vitellius; but his army being speedily routed, he was compelled to seek safety by flight. For some time he wandered through the Roman provinces, without being discovered; but finding the pursuit every day closer, he was obliged to hide himself in a cave, in which he remained concealed for no less than nine years, attended all the time by his faithful wife Epponina, who provided provisions for his support by day, and repaired to him in the night. She was, at length, discovered in the performance of this pious office; and Sabinus was taken prisoner, and carried to Rome. Several intercessions were made to the emperor in his behalf; Epponina herself appearing with her two children, and imploring her husband's pardon. However, neither her tears nor entreaties could prevail; and the wretched Sabinus being sentenced to death, suffered under the common executioner;—an action, which, taken in all its circumstances, would tarnish more virtues than Vespasian ever possessed.

It must, however, be remarked, that this is a solitary and unaccountable instance of rancorous resentment in Vespasian. He caused the daughter of Vitellius, his avowed enemy, to be married into a noble family; himself providing her a suitable fortune. One of Nero's servants coming to intreat pardon for having once rudely thrust him out of the palace, and insulting him when in office, Vespasian only took his revenge by serving him just in the same manner. When any plots or conspiracies were formed against him, he disdained to punish the guilty; saying, "that they deserved rather his contempt for their ignorance, than his resentment, as they seemed to envy him a dignity, of which he daily experienced the uneasiness."

easiness." When he was seriously advised to beware of Metius Pomposianus, against whom there was strong cause of suspicion, he raised him to the dignity of consul; adding, that the time would come when he must be sensible of so great a benefit.

His liberality in the encouragement of arts and learning was not less than his clemency. He settled a constant salary of a hundred thousand sesterces upon the teachers of rhetoric. He was particularly kind to Josephus, the Jewish historian: Quintilian the orator, and Pliny the naturalist, flourished in his reign, and were highly esteemed by him; and, in short, the professors of every useful art or science were sure to experience his bounty

Yet all his acts of generosity and munificence cannot preserve his character from the imputation of rapacity and avarice. He revived many obsolete methods of taxation; and even bought and sold commodities himself, in order to increase his fortune. He descended to some very unusual and dishonourable imposts, particularly in laying a tax upon urine. When his son Titus remonstrated against the meanness of such a tax, Vespasian taking a piece of money, demanded if the smell offended him; adding, this very money was produced by urine. The treasury, when Vespasian came to the throne, was so much exhausted, that he informed the senate it would require a supply of three hundred millions of our money, to re-establish the commonwealth. This necessity would naturally produce more numerous and heavy taxations than the empire had hitherto experienced: but while he collected money from his subjects by various ex-

pedients, he neither expended it in private gratifications, nor in enriching his family.

In the fourth year of his reign, Antiochus, king of Comagena, holding a private correspondence with the Parthians the declared enemies of Rome, was taken prisoner in Cilicia, by Pœtus, the governor, and sent bound to Rome; but Vespasian generously allowed him a revenue suitable to his dignity, and fixed his residence at Lacedæmon.

A. D. 73. About the same time, the Alani, a barbarous people, on the Tanais, abandoning their barren wilds, invaded the kingdom of Media; and thence passing like a torrent into Armenia, after great ravages they overthrew Tiridates, the king of that country, with prodigious slaughter. Titus was at length sent to chastise their insolence, and relieve a king who was in alliance with Rome; but the barbarians retired at the approach of the Roman army, loaded with plunder.

The care and attention of Vespasian pervaded the remotest provinces of the empire, and their inhabitants felt his tenderness or his power. He had, during his whole reign, a particular regard to Britain; his generals, Petilius Cerealis and Julius Frontinus, brought the greatest part of the island into subjection: and Agricola, who succeeded soon after, completed what they had begun.

Such long and uninterrupted success had not, however, the smallest effect in rendering him vain. He ever seemed averse from those swelling titles which the senate and people were constantly offering him. When the king of Parthia, in one of his letters, styled himself king of kings, Vespasian

pasian, in his answer, only called himself simply Flavius Vespasian. He was so far from attempting to hide the meanness of his original, that he frequently mentioned it in company; and when some flatterers were for deriving his pedigree from Hercules, he despised and derided the meanness of their adulation. In this manner, having reigned ten years, beloved by his subjects, and deserving their affection, he was surprised with an indisposition at Campania, which from the beginning he declared would be fatal; crying out, in the spirit of paganism, "Methinks I "am going to be a god". Removing thence to the city, and afterwards to a country-house near Reate, the seat of his fathers, he was there taken with a flux, which brought him to the last extremity. Perceiving his end approaching, and that he was just going to expire, he cried out, "that an emperor ought to die standing;" and, therefore, raising himself upon his feet, he expired in the arms of his supporters.

His character has thus been summed up by Pliny: "He was a man in whom power "made no alteration, except in giving him "the opportunity of doing good equal to his "will."

No sooner had Vespasian submitted to the mortal condition, than his son Titus was joyfully received as emperor, and began to reign with the practice of every virtue. During the life of his father there had been imputations against him of cruelty, lust, and prodigality; but upon his exaltation to the throne, he shook off every vice, and became an example of the greatest moderation and humanity. His first step towards gaining

A. D. 79.

the affections of his subjects, was by moderating his passions, and bridling his appetites. He had long loved Berenice, sister to Agrippa, king of Judæa, a woman of the greatest beauty, and the most refined allurements; but knowing that the connection with her was entirely disagreeable to the people of Rome, he gained a victory over his affections, and sent her away, notwithstanding their mutual passion, and all her arts. He next dismissed those who had been the ministers of his pleasures, and forbore to countenance the companions of his looser recreations, though he had formerly taken great pains in the selection. This prudent conduct, added to his justice and generosity, procured him the love of all good men, and the appellation of the Delight of Mankind; which all his actions seemed to deserve.

As he came to the throne with all the advantages of his father's popularity, he resolved to use every method to increase it. He therefore took particular care to punish all informers, false witnesses, and promoters of dissension. Those wretches, who had their rise in the licentiousness and impunity of former reigns, were now so numerous, that their crimes called loudly for punishment. Of these, therefore, he daily made public examples: condemning them to be scourged in the most public streets; next to be dragged through the theatre; then to be conveyed into the uninhabited parts of the empire, or sold as slaves. To gratify the citizens, he exhibited many sumptuous and magnificent shows; and even indulged them so far as to permit them to dictate the manner in which they should choose to be entertained. His courtesy and promptitude

to

to do good have been celebrated even by Christian writers; his principal rule being never to send any petitioner dissatisfied away. One night, at table, recollecting that he had done nothing beneficial to mankind during the day, he exclaimed, "O my friends, I have lost a day." A reflection which too many may daily have reason to make; but which seems to have been a rare occurrence with this amiable prince.

He was so tender of the lives of his subjects, that he took upon him the office of Pontifex Maximus, or high-priest, in order to keep his hands undefiled with blood. He so little regarded such as censured or abused him, that he was heard to say, "When I do nothing worthy "of censure, why should I be displeased at it?" He was even heard to affirm, that he had rather die himself than put another to death. Learning that two noblemen had conspired against him, he readily forgave them; and the next day placing them near himself in the theatre, he put the swords with which the gladiators fought into their hands, demanding their judgment and approbation, whether they were of sufficient shortness. With equal indulgence, he pardoned his brother Domitian, who had actually prepared all things for an open rebellion.

In this reign an irruption of Mount Vesuvius did considerable damage; overwhelming many towns, and throwing its ashes into countries more than a hundred miles distant. Upon this memorable occasion, Pliny, the naturalist, lost his life; for being impelled by too eager a curiosity to observe the irruption, he was suffocated by the effluvia. There happened also about this time a fire at Rome, which continued three days and

nights

nights without intermission; and this was followed by a plague, in which ten thousand men were buried in a day. The emperor, however, did all that lay in his power to repair the damages sustained by the public; and, with respect to the city, declared that he would take the whole loss of that upon himself.

These disasters were in some measure compensated by the successes in Britain, under Agricola. This excellent general having been sent into that country towards the latter end of Vespasian's reign, shewed himself equally expert in quelling the refractory, and civilising those who had formerly submitted to the Roman power. The Ordovices, or inhabitants of North Wales, were first subdued. He then made a descent upon Mona, or the island of Anglesey, which surrendered at discretion. Having thus rendered himself master of the whole country, he took every method to restore discipline to his own army, and to introduce politeness among those whom he had conquered. He exhorted them, both by advice and example, to build temples, theatres, and stately houses. He caused the sons of their nobility to be instructed in the liberal arts; he had them taught the Latin language, and induced them to imitate the Roman modes of dress and living. Thus, by degrees, this barbarous people began to assume the luxurious manners of their conquerors. For these successes in Britain, Titus was saluted emperor the fifteenth time; but he did not long survive this honour, being seized by a violent fever, at a little distance from Rome. Perceiving his death approach, he declared, that, during

during the whole course of his life, he knew but one action of which he repented; and that action he did not think proper to name. He expired shortly after; not without suspicion of treachery from his brother Domitian, who had long wished to govern. His death happened in the forty-first year of his age, and the third year of his reign; and as he lived universally beloved, the tears and lamentations of his people followed his obsequies, and history is proud to record his name among the most meritorious of princes.

A. D. 81. U. C. 83.

The love which all ranks of people bore to Titus, facilitated the election of his brother Domitian, notwithstanding the unfavourable idea many had conceived of him. His ambition was already but too well known, and his pride soon appeared upon his coming to the throne; having been heard to declare, that he had given the empire to his father and brother, and now received it again as his due.

The beginning of his reign, however, was universally acceptable to the people, as he appeared equally remarkable for his clemency, liberality, and justice. He carried his abhorrence of cruelty so far, as at one time to forbid the sacrificing of oxen. His liberality was such, that he would not accept of the legacies that were left him by such as had children of their own; and his justice induced him to sit whole days, and reverse the partial sentences of the ordinary judges.

But the mask of dissimulation soon dropped off, and he appeared in all his natural deformity. Instead of cultivating literature, as his father and brother had done, he neglected all kinds of study, addicting himself wholly to meaner pur-

suits.

suits, particularly archery and gaming, in both which he excelled. He instituted three sorts of contest to be observed every five years:—in music, horsemanship, and wrestling: but at the same time he banished all philosophers and mathematicians from Rome. No emperor before him entertained the people with such various and expensive shows. During these diversions he distributed great rewards, sitting as president himself, adorned with a purple robe and crown, with the priests of Jupiter, and the college of Flavian priests, about him. His ignoble pursuits in solitude was a just contrast to his exhibitions of public ostentation. He usually spent his hours of retirement in catching flies, and sticking them through with a bodkin; so that one of his servants being asked if the emperor were alone, answered that he had not so much as a fly to bear him company.

His vices seemed every day to increase with the duration of his reign; and as he thus became more odious to his people, all their murmurs only served to add strength to his suspicions, and malice to his cruelty. His ungrateful treatment of Agricola was one of the first indications of his natural malevolence. Domitian was always particularly fond of obtaining a military reputation, and therefore jealous of it in others. He had marched some time before into Gaul, upon a pretended expedition against the Catti, a people of Germany; and, without ever seeing the enemy, resolved to have the honour of a triumph upon his return to Rome. For that purpose he purchased a number of slaves, whom he dressed in German habits, and at the head of this miserable procession, entered the city, amidst the apparent accla-

acclamations, but concealed contempt, of his subjects. The successes, therefore, of Agricola in Britain, affected him with extreme envy. This admirable general, pursuing the advantages which he had already obtained, subdued the Caledonians; overcame Calgacus, the British chief, at the head of thirty thousand men; and afterwards sending out a fleet to scour the coast, discovered and subdued the Orkneys; and thus reduced the whole to a civilised province of the Roman empire. When the account of these successes was brought to Domitian, he received it with seeming pleasure, but real chagrin. He ordered him, therefore, external marks of approbation; and took care that triumphant ornaments, statues, and other honours, should be decreed him: but, at the same time, he removed him from his command, under a pretence of appointing him to the government of Syria. Agricola surrendered up his province to Sallustius Lucullus, but soon found that Syria was otherwise disposed of. Upon his return to Rome, which was privately and by night, he was coldly received by the emperor; and died some time after in retirement, not without suspicion of violence by the emperor's direction.

Domitian, however, soon found the want of so experienced a commander, in the many irruptions of the barbarous nations that surrounded the empire. The Sarmatians in Europe, joined with those of Asia, made a formidable invasion; while the Dacians, under the conduct of Decebalus their king, overthrew the Romans in several engagements. The contests now were not for the limits of the empire, and the banks of the Danube; but the provinces themselves were in

danger.

danger. One loss followed another; and every season became memorable for some remarkable overthrow. At last, the barbarians were repelled, partly by force, and partly by the assistance of money; which only enabled them to make future invasions with great advantage. But though little honour was gained by the repulse of the enemy, Domitian resolved not to lose the pageant of a triumph. He returned in great splendour to Rome; and, not contented with thus triumphing twice without a victory, he assumed the surname of Germanicus, for a conquest over a people with whom he had never contended.

In proportion as ridicule was justly provoked to aim its darts against him, his pride seemed every day to demand greater homage. He permitted no statues to be erected to his honour, unless of gold and silver, and was satisfied with no less veneration than was paid to the gods themselves, whose titles he also assumed. His cruelty was not inferior to his ignorance; he caused numbers of the most illustrious senators, and others, to be put to death, upon the most trifling pretences. One Ælius Lamia was condemned and executed only for jesting, though there was neither novelty nor poignancy in his humour. Cocceianus was murderod only for celebrating the nativity of Otho. Pomposianus shared the same fate, because it was foretold by an astrologer that he should be emperor. Sallustius Lucullus, his lieutenant in Britain, was destroyed only for having given his name to a new sort of lances of his own invention; and Junius Rusticus died for publishing a book, in which he commended Thrasea and Priscus, who

who had opposed Vespasian's elevation to the purple.

Such cruelties as these, which seem almost without a motive, deservedly produced resistance. Lucius Antonius, governor of Upper Germany, knowing how much the emperor was detested at home, resolved upon contending for the throne; and, accordingly, assumed the ensigns of imperial dignity. As he was at the head of a formidable army, his success remained a long time doubtful; but a sudden overflowing of the Rhine dividing his army at that juncture, he was attacked by the emperor's general, and totally routed. Domitian's severity was greatly increased by this short-lived success. In order to discover the accomplices of the adverse party, he invented new tortures; sometimes cutting off the hands, at other times thrusting fire into the privities of the suspected: and that he might still further aggravate his guilt by hypocrisy, he never pronounced sentence without a preamble full of gentleness and mercy. The night before he crucified the comptroller of his household, he treated him with the most flattering marks of friendship, and ordered him a dish of meat from his own table. He carried Aretinus Clemens with him in his own litter the day he had resolved upon his death. To the senate and nobility he was particularly hostile, frequently threatening to extirpate them all. At one time he surrounded the senate-house with his troops, to the great consternation of the senators. At another, he amused himself with their terrors in a different manner. Having invited them to a public entertainment, he re-

A.D. 89.

ceived them all very formally at the entrance of his palace, and conducted them into a specious hall, hung round with black, and illuminated by a few melancholy lamps, that diffused light only sufficient to shew the horrors of the place. All around were to be seen nothing but coffins, with the names of each of the senators written upon them, together with other objects of terror, and instruments of execution. While the company beheld all these preparations with silent agony, several men, having their bodies blackened, each with a drawn sword in one hand, and a flaming torch in the other, entered the hall, and danced round them. Having enjoyed this scene for some time, and sufficiently sported with the fears and feelings of his guests, the doors were set open, and one of the servants came to inform them, that the emperor gave all the company leave to withdraw.

To render these capricious cruelties more odious, lust and avarice were superadded. Frequently, after presiding at an execution, he would retire with the lewdest prostitutes. His extortion, the consequence of his prodigality, had no bounds. He seized the estates of all against whom he could find the smallest pretence; the most trifling action, or word, against the majesty of the prince, was sufficient to ruin the possessor. In particular he exacted large sums from the rich jews, who even then began to practise the arts of money getting, for which they are still so remarkable. Against them, he was incited not only by avarice, but by jealousy. A prophecy * had been long cur-

* This prophecy without doubt referred to the MESSIAH, who was generally expected to make his appearance in the height of temporal power.

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rent in the east, that a person from the line of David should rule the world; to evade which, this monster commanded all the Jews of the lineage of David, to be diligently sought out, and put to death. Two Christians, grandsons of St. Jude, the apostle of that line, were brought before him; but finding them poor, and no way ambitious of temporal power, he dismissed them, as objects too mean for his jealousy. However, his persecutions of the Christians was more severe than that of any of his predecessors. By his letters and edicts they were banished A.D. 95.
in several parts of the empire, and put to death with all the tortures of ingenious cruelty. The predictions of the Chaldeans and astrologers also, concerning his death, gave him violent apprehensions, and kept him in the most tormenting disquietude. His jealousies increasing with a sense of his demerits, he ordered the gallery in which he walked, to be set round with a pellucid stone, which served as a mirror to reflect the persons of all such as approached him from behind. Every omen and prodigy gave him fresh anxiety; and in proportion as he became fearful, he became more cruel. Even Nero is degraded by a comparison with this wretch. The former exercised his cruelties without being a spectator: but a principal part of the Roman miseries during this reign, was to see and be seen; to behold the stern air and fiery visage of the tyrant, directing the tortures, and maliciously pleased with adding poignancy to every agony.

But a period was soon to be put to his unblushing enormities. Rome had now, by horrid ex-

perience, learned the art of ridding herself of her tyrants. Among the number of those whom he at once caressed and suspected, was his wife Domitia, whom he had taken from Ælius Lamia, her former husband. This woman, however, was become obnoxious to him, for having placed her affections upon one Paris, a player; and he resolved to dispatch her with several others whom he either hated or suspected. It was the tyrant's method to put down the names of all such as he intended to destroy in his tablets, which he carried about him, with great circumspection. Domitia, fortunately happened to get a sight of them, was struck at finding her own name in the devoted catalogue. She shewed the fatal list to Norbanus and Pretonius, præfects of the prætorian bands; to Stephanus, the comptroller of the household; and to Parthenius, the chief chamberlain. These finding themselves proscribed, after many consultations, determined to dispatch the tyrant, and fixing upon the eighteenth day of September for the completion of their great attempt. Domitian, whose death was every day foretold by the astrologers, was, it seems, in some measure apprehensive of that particular day; and as he had been ever timorous, so was he now more particularly upon his guard. He had for some time before secluded himself in the most secret recesses of his palace, and at midnight was so affrighted as to leap out of his bed, inquiring of his attendants what hour of the night it was. Upon their falsely assuring him that it was an hour later than that which he was taught to apprehend, quite transported, as if all danger were past, he prepared to go to the bath,

bath. Just then, Petronius, his chamberlain, came to inform him, that Stephanus, the comptroller of the household, desired to speak to him upon an affair of the utmost importance. The emperor having given orders that his attendants should retire, Stephanus entered with his hand in a scarf, which he had worn thus for some days, the better to conceal a dagger, as none were permitted to approach the emperor with arms. He began by giving information of a pretended conspiracy, and exhibited a paper, in which the particulars were specified. While Domitian was reading the contents, with an eager curiosity, Stephanus drew his dagger, and struck him in the groin. The wound not being mortal, Domitian caught hold of the assassin, and threw him upon the ground, calling out for assistance. He demanded also his sword, which was usually placed under his pillow; but a boy who attended in the apartment, running to fetch it, found only the scabbard. Domitian, however, unarmed as he was, would have been an overmatch for Stephanus, had not his freedman, a gladiator, and two subalterns rushed in, and dispatched the emperor with seven wounds. Stephanus himself was also slain on the spot by some officers of the guard who came to their master's rescue.

A.D. 96. U.C. 846.

Prodigies at this period were so common, and ignorance gave such scope to imposture, that it is almost unworthy of history to record them. Yet the following circumstance is too curious to be omitted. It is related, that Apollonius Tyaneus, a philosoper, who was lecturing in a

 public

public garden at Ephesus, at the very moment Domitian was slain, stopping his harangue, exclaimed, "Courage, Stephanus, strike the ty-"rant!" And then, after a pause—"Rejoice, "my friends, the tyrant dies this day: --this day "do I say! the very moment in which I kept "silence he suffered for his crimes---he dies!"

CHAP. XVIII.

The Reigns of Nerva, Trajan, and Adrian.

NO sooner was the death of Domitian publicly announced, than the senate assembled in an ecstasy of joy, which such a deliverance well merited; and having passed a decree that all his inscriptions should be erased, his name struck out of the registers of fame, and his funeral omitted, they immediately, with one voice, declared Cocceius Nerva, emperor, lest the army should have time or inclination to interfere in the election.

Nerva was of an illustrious family, though not originally Roman, and above sixty-five years old when he was called to the throne. He was, at that time, the most remarkable man in Rome for his virtues, moderation, and respect to the laws; and he owed his exaltation solely to the blameless conduct of his former life. When the senate went to pay him their submissions, he received them with his accustomed humility, while Arius Antonius, his most intimate friend, having embraced him with great familiarity, addressed him in a language very different from that which the former emperors were accustomed to hear. "I come," said he, "with others, to "congratulate, not your good fortune, but that "of the Roman empire. You have long escaped "the malice of your enemies, and the cruelty of "tyrants. Now, at the decline of life, to be "plunged

"plunged into new troubles, and surrounding "dangers, to be exposed, not only to the hatred "of enemies, but to the dangerous requests of "friendship, is not a state to be wished for: "your enemies will naturally envy; and your "friends, presuming upon your former favour, "if their suits be denied, will become enemies; "so that you must either injure the public, or "lose their favour." Such candid advice was received with proper gratitude; and, indeed, no emperor seemed to want such advice more than he; as the easy indulgence of his disposition made him the prey of his insidious courtiers.

Upon coming to the throne, he solemnly swore that no senator of Rome should be put to death by his command, during his reign, from any cause whatever. This oath he so religiously observed, that when two senators had conspired his death, he sent for them, and carried them with him to the public theatre: there presenting each a dagger, he desired them to strike, as he was determined not to ward off the blow. Such acts of clemency appeared to the multitude as virtues; but others saw them in a different light, and considered them as encouragements to vice. One of the principal men in Rome was heard to declare, that it was indeed a misfortune to live under a prince who considered innocence as a crime; but a greater still, to live under one who regarded crimes as innocence. Having one night invited Veiento, one of Domitian's most vicious favourites, to supper, the conversation turned upon the vices of Catullus Messalinus, whose memory was detested for his cruelties, during the former reign. As each of the guests mentioned him with horror, Nerva was induced

to

to ask one Mauricus, who sat at table, "What "do you think, Mauricus, would become of "such a man now?"—"I think," replied Mauricus, pointing to Veiento, "that he would have "been invited, as some of us are, to supper."

However just such sarcasms might have been, Nerva bore them with the utmost good-humour, as he was ever more desirous of being loved than feared by his subjects. His liberality was so extensive, that upon his first promotion to the empire, he was constrained to sell his gold and silver plate, with his other rich moveables. He released the cities of the empire from many severe duties, which had been imposed by his predecessors, and restored the property of those who had been unjustly dispossessed.

During his short reign, he made several good laws and regulations; and in every respect behaved like an indulgent father to his people. He permitted no statues to be erected to his honour, and converted such of Domitian's as had been spared by the senate into money. He sold many rich robes, and much of the splendid furniture of the palace, and retrenched several unreasonable expences at court. At the same time, he had so little regard for money, that when one of his subjects found a large treasure, and submitted the disposal of it to the emperor, he received for answer that he might *use it*: but the finder still informing the emperor that it was a fortune too large for a private person. Nerva, admiring his honesty, wrote him word, that then he might *abuse it*.

Such generosity and mildness, however, did not escape enmity. Calphurnius Crassus, with some others, formed a dangerous conspiracy to destroy

destroy him; but Nerva would use no severity; he was satisfied with banishing those who were culpable, though the senate were for inflicting more rigorous punishments. But the most dangerous insurrection against his interests was from the prætorian bands, who, headed by Casperius Olianus, insisted upon revenging the late emperor's death, whose memory was still dear to them, from his frequent liberalities. Nerva, whose kindness to good men rendered him more obnoxious to the vicious, did all in his power to stop the progress of this insurrection; he presented himself to the mutinous soldiers, and, opening his bosom, desired them to strike there, rather than be guilty of so much injustice. The soldiers paid no regard to his remonstrances, but seizing Petronius and Porthenius, slew them in the most ignominious manner. Not content with this outrage, they even compelled the emperor to approve their sedition, and to make a speech to the people, in which he thanked the cohorts for their fidelity.

This harsh constraint upon the emperor's inclinations, was, in the event, attended with the most happy effects, as it caused the adoption of Trajan to succeed him. Nerva, perceiving that in the present turbulent disposition of the times he stood in need of an assistant in the empire, who might share the fatigues of government, and contribute to keep the licentious in awe, with a generous concern for the public welfare, fixed upon Ulpius Trajan, an utter stranger to his family, and who was then governor in Upper Germany, as his colleague and successor.

The adoption of this admirable man proved so great

great a curb to the licentiousness of the soldiery, that they continued in perfect obedience during the rest of his reign.

This was the last public act of Nerva. In about three months after, he was seized with a fever, of which he died, after a short reign of one year, four months, and nine days; highly esteemed for his generosity and moderation, and deservedly endeared to the good of every rank. Indeed, had he possessed no other merit, his adoption of such a man as Trajan would entitle him to respect.

Trajan's family was originally from Italy, though he was born at Seville in Spain. He very early accompanied his father, who was a general of the Romans, in his expeditions along the Euphrates and the Rhine, and, while yet very young, acquired a considerable reputation for military talents. He inured his body to fatigue; he made long marches on foot; and laboured to acquire all that skill in war which was necessary for a commander. When he was made general of the army in Lower Germany, one of the most considerable employments in the empire, it caused no alteration in his manners or way of living, nor did he differ from the private tribune, except in his superior wisdom and virtues. The great qualities of his mind were set off by all the advantages of person; and he was now in that middle time of life which is happily tempered with the warmth of youth, and the caution of age. To these endowments was added a modesty that seemed peculiar to himself; so that mankind found a pleasure in praising those accomplishments of which the possessor seemed

A.D. 98.

U.C. 851.

no way conscious. Upon the whole, Trajan is distinguished as the greatest and the best emperor which Rome ever saw. Others might have equalled him in war, and some might have been his rivals in clemency and goodness; but he seems the only prince who united these talents in the greatest perfection, and who equally engages our admiration, and our regard.

Being informed of the death of Nerva, he prepared to return to Rome, whither he was invited by the united entreaties of the state. His march was conducted with a discipline that had, for a long time been unknown in the armies of the empire. The countries through which he passed, were neither ravaged nor taxed, and he entered the city, not in triumph, though he had deserved many, but on foot, attended with the civil officers of the state, and followed by his soldiers, who marched silently forward, with modesty and respect.

One of the first lectures he received, in regard to his conduct as emperor, was from Plutarch, the philosopher, who had the honour of being his master. "Since,*" observed this eminent writer, "your merits, and not your importunities, have advanced you to the empire, "permit me to congratulate your virtues, and "my own good fortune. If your future government prove answerable to your former "worth, I shall be happy; but if you become "worse for power, yours will be the danger, and "mine the ignominy of your conduct. The

* This epistle has by some been reckoned spurious, but it richly deserves a place in this history from its intrinsic merit.

"errors

" errors of the pupil will be charged upon his " instructor,—Seneca is reproached for the enormities of Nero; and Socrates and Quintilian " have not escaped censure for the misconduct " of their respective scholars. But you have it " in your power to make me the most honoured " of men, by continuing what you are. Continue the command of your passions; and " make virtue the scope of all your actions. If " you follow these instructions, then shall I glory in my having presumed to give them; if you " neglect what I offer, then will this letter be my " testimony that you have not erred through the " counsel and authority of Plutarch."

The most rapid review of Trajan's actions would carry us beyond our limits. Suffice it therefore to say, that his application to business, his moderation to his enemies, his modesty in exaltation, his liberality to the deserving, and his frugality in his own expences, have all been the subject of panegyric among his contemporaries; and they continue to be the admiration of posterity.

Upon giving the præfect of the prætorian bands, the sword, according to custom, he made use of this remarkable expression: " Take this " sword, and use it;—if I have merit, for me; " if otherwise, against me." After which, he added, " that he who made laws was the first who was bound to preserve them."

If he had any failings, they were, his love of women, and his immoderate passion for war. The first war he was engaged in, after his coming to the throne, was with the Dacians, who during the reign of Domitian, had commit- A. D. 102.

ted numberless ravages upon the provinces of the empire. He therefore raised a powerful army, and with great expedition marched into those barbarous countries, where he was vigorously opposed, for a long time, by Decebalus, the Dacian king. At length, this monarch, being constrained to come to a general battle, and no longer able to protract the war, was routed with great slaughter; though not without much loss to the conqueror. The Roman soldiers, upon this occasion, wanting linen to bind up their wounds, the emperor tore his own robe to supply them. This victory compelled the enemy to sue for peace, which they obtained upon very disadvantageous terms: the king himself entering the Roman camp, paid his homage as a vassal of Rome.

Upon Trajan's return, after the triumphs and rejoicings, usual upon such occasions, were over, he was surprised with an account, that the Dacians had renewed hostilities. Decebalus their king was, therefore, a second time, adjudged an enemy to the Roman state, and Trajan invaded his dominions with an army equal to that with which he had before subdued him. But Decebalus, now grown more cautious by his former defeat, used every art to protract the war. He also put various stratagems in practice to distress the enemy; and, at one time, the emperor was in great personal danger. Decebalus also took Longinus, one of the Roman generals, prisoner, and threatened to kill him, in case Trajan refused to grant him terms of peace. But the emperor replied, "that peace and war had not their dependence upon the safety of one subject only:" and Longinus some time after fell by a voluntary death. The fate of

of this general seemed to give new vigour to Trajan's operations. In order to be better enabled to invade the enemies territories at pleasure, he undertook a most stupendous work, which was no less then building a bridge across the Danabe. This amazing structure consisted of more than twenty-two arches, a hundred and fifty-feet high, and a hundred and seventy broad; and its present ruins shew modern architects how far they were surpassed by the ancients, both in the greatness and the boldness of their designs. Upon finishing this work, Trajan continued the war with great vigour, sharing with the meanest of his soldiers the fatigues of the campaign, and animating them to their duty by his own example. By these means, notwithstanding the country was spacious and uncultivated, and the inhabitants brave and hardy, he finally subdued the whole, and annexed Dacia to the Roman empire. Decebalus made some attempts to escape, but being surrounded on every side, he at last slew himself, and his head was sent immediately to Rome, as a trophy of success. These conquests seemed to advance the empire to greater splendour and fame than it had hitherto acquired. Ambassadors came from the interior parts of India, to congratulate Trajan's success, and solicit his friendship. At his return to Rome, he entered the city in triumph; and the rejoicings for his victories lasted for the space of a hundred and twenty days.

A. D. 106.

Peace being now firmly established, Trajan turned his attedtion to internal affairs. He adorned the city with public buildings; he freed it from such men as lived by their vices; he en-

tertained persons of merit with the utmost familiarity; while he so little feared his enemies, that he could scarcely be induced to suppose he had any. Being one day told, that his friend and favourite, Surá, was false to him; Trajan, to shew how much he relied upon his fidelity, went, in his ordinary manner, to sup with him. There he commanded Sura's surgeon to be brought, whom he ordered to take off the hair about his eye-brows. He then made the barber shave his beard, and then went unconcerned into the bath as usual. The next day, when Sura's accusers were renewing their obloquy, Trajan informing them how he had spent the night, "If," cried he, "Sura had any designs against "my life, he then had the fairest opportunity."

It had been happy for this great prince's memory, if he had shewn equal clemency to all his subjects; but about the ninth year of his reign, he was persuaded to look upon the Christians with a jealous eye. The extreme veneration which he professed for the religion of the empire, set him sedulously to oppose every innovation, and the progress of Christianity seems to have alarmed him. A law had, some time before, been promulgated, in which all Hetæriæ, or societies dissenting from the established religion, were declared illegal. Under the sanction of this law, the Christians were persecuted in all parts of the empire. Great numbers of them were put to death, as well by popular tumults as by edicts and judicial proceedings. In this persecution, St. Clemens, bishop of Rome, was condemned to be thrown into the sea, with an anchor about his neck; St. Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem, at the age of a hundred and twenty

twenty was scourged and crucified; and St. Ignatius, who had a particular dispute with Trajan, at Antioch, was condemned to be thrown to wild beasts, in the amphitheatre at Rome. However, the persecution ceased after some time: for the emperor having advice from Pliny, the pro-consul in Bithynia, of the innocence and simplicity of the Christians, and of their inoffensive and moral way of living; he gave orders that they should not be sought after: but if any offered themselves, or refused to sacrifice to the gods, that they should, in either case, suffer.

The Arminians and Parthians having thrown off all submission to Rome, Trajan was constrained to turn his arms against them, and to head the forces in person. While he was thus employed, there was a dreadful insurrection of the Jews in all parts of the empire. This wretched people, still infatuated, and ever expecting some signal deliverer, took the advantage of Trajan's absence in the East, to massacre all the Greeks and Romans whom they got into their power, without reluctance or mercy. This rebellion first began in Cyrene, a Roman province in Africa; thence the flames extended to Egypt, and next to the island of Cyprus. These places they, in a manner, dispeopled with ungovernable fury. Their barbarities were such, that they ate the flesh of their enemies, wore their skins, sawed them asunder, cast them to wild beasts, made them kill each other, and studied new torments by which to destroy them. However, these horrid excesses were of no long duration: the governors of the respective provinces making head against their tumultuous

fury, soon treated them with a retaliation of cruelty, and put them to death, not as human beings, but as outrageous pests to society.

But to return: Trajan having speedily reduced Armenia to submission, he marched into the dominions of the king of Parthia. There entering the opulent kingdom of Mesopotamia, he reduced it into the form of a Roman province. Thence, he went against the Parthians, over whom his successes were great and numerous. He conquered Syria and Chaldea; and took the famous city of Babylon. There, attempting to cross the Euphrates, he was opposed by the enemy, who resolved to stop his passage: but he secretly caused boats to be made upon the adjoining mountains; and bringing them to the water-side, passed his army with great expedition; not, however, without great slaughter on both sides. Thence, he traversed large tracts of country, which had never before been invaded by a Roman army; and seemed to take a pleasure in pursuing the same march which Alexander the Great had marked out before him. Having passed the rapid stream of the Tigris, he advanced to the city Ctesiphon, which he took, and opened himself a passage into Persia; where he made many conquests, which, however, were rather splendid than useful.

A. D. 115

After subduing all the country bordering on the Tigris, he marched southward of the Persian gulf, where he subdued a king, who possessed a considerable island, made by the divided streams of that river. Here winter coming on, he was in danger of losing the greatest part of his army by the inclemency of the climate,

mate, and the inundations of the river. He therefore, with indefatigable pains, fitted out a fleet, and sailing down the Persian gulf, entered the Indian ocean, conquering even to the Indies, part of which he annexed to the Roman empire. He was prevented from pursuing further conquests in this distant country, by the revolt of many of the provinces he had already subdued, and by the scarcity of provisions. The inconveniences of increasing age, also contributed to damp the ardour of this enterprise, which at one time he intended to pursue to the confines of the earth. Returning therefore along the Persian gulf, and sending the senate a particular account of all the nations he had conquered, the names of which alone composed a long catalogue, he prepared to punish those countries which had revolted from him. He began by laying the famous city of Edessa, in Mesopotamia, in ashes; and, in a short space of time, not only retook those places which had before acknowledged subjection, but made himself master of all the most fertile kingdoms of Asia. In this train of successes he scarcely met with a repulse, except before the city of Atra, in the deserts of Arabia. Wherefore, judging that this was a proper time for bounding his conquests, he resolved to give a master to the countries he had subdued. With this resolution, repairing to the city Ctesiphon, in Persia, with great ceremony, he crowned Parthenaspates king of Parthia, to the great joy of all his subjects. He established another king also over the kingdom of Albania, near the Caspian sea. Then, placing governors and lieutenants in other provinces, and leaving Adrian general of his

his forces in the East, he resolved to return to his capital in a style of unparalleled magnificence. However, he had only reached the province of Cilicia, when he found himself too weak to proceed in his usual manner. He therefore ordered himself to be carried on shipboard to the city of Seleucia, where he died, in the sixty third year of his age, after a reign of nineteen years six months and fifteen days. How highly he was esteemed by his subjects appears from their manner of blessing his successors, by wishing them the fortune of Augustus, and the goodness of Trajan. His military virtues, however, upon which he chiefly valued himself, produced no real advantage to his country, and all his conquests disappeared, when the power was withdrawn that enforced them.

During Trajan's last illness, his wife Plotina constantly attended him, and it is supposed forged the will by which Adrian was nominated his successor. Adrian was by descent a Spaniard, nephew to the late emperor, and married to Sabina his grand-niece. When Trajan was raised to the empire, Adrian was a tribune of the army in Mæsia, and was sent by the troops to congratulate the emperor on his advancement. But his brother-in-law, who desired to have an opportunity of congratulating Trajan himself, supplied Adrian with a carriage that broke down on the way. Adrian, however, was resolved to lose no time, and performed the rest of the journey on foot. This assiduity was very pleasing to the emperor; but he disliked Adrian from several more prevailing motives. He was expensive, and involved in debt; inconstant, capricious, and envious. These faults, in Trajan's opinion, could not be compensated

compensated either by Adrian's learning or his talents. His great skill in the Greek and Latin languages, his intimate acquaintance with the laws of his country, and the philosophy of the times, were slight recommendations to Trajan, who, being bred himself a soldier, desired to have a military man to succeed him. For this reason it was that the dying emperor would by no means appoint a successor; fearful, perhaps, of injuring his great reputation, by adopting a person that was unworthy. His death, therefore, was concealed for some time by Plotina, his wife, till Adrian had sounded the inclinations of the army, and found them firm in his interests. The forged instrument was then produced and published as genuine, in consequence of which Adrian, while commanding at Antioch, was elected by all the orders of the state.

Adrian soon began to pursue a course quite opposite to that of his predecessor, taking every method of declining war, and promoting the arts of peace. For this reason he abandoned all the conquests which Trajan had made, judging them to be rather an inconvenience than an advantage to the empire; and made the river Euphrates the boundary of the empire, placing the legions along its banks, to prevent the incursions of the enemy.

Having thus settled the affairs of the East, and leaving Severus governor of Syria, he took his journey by land to Rome, sending the ashes of Trajan thither by sea. Upon his approach to the city, he was informed that a magnificent triumph was preparing for him; but this he modestly declined, desiring that the honours might be paid to Trajan's memory, which they had designed for him. In consequence of this command,

mand, a most superb triumph was decreed, in which Trajan's statue was carried as the principal figure in the procession, an honour never before conferred on the dead; and not content with this, his ashes were placed in a golden urn, upon the top of a column a hundred and forty feet high; charged with the particulars of all his exploits in basso-relievo, which is still remaining.

It was difficult for any man to appear to advantage after Trajan; yet Adrian was one of the most remarkable of the Roman emperors, for the variety of his endowments. He was highly skilful in all the exercises both of body and mind. He composed with great beauty both in prose and verse; he pleaded at the bar, and was one of the best orators of his time. He was deeply versed in the mathematics, and no less skilful in physic. In drawing and painting, he was equal to the greatest masters; an excellent musician, and sung to admiration. Beside these qualifications, he had an astonishing memory; he knew the names of all his soldiers, though never so long absent. He could dictate to one, confer with another, and write himself, all at the same time. He was remarkably expert in military discipline; strong and very skilful in arms, both on horseback and foot; and frequently killed wild boars, and even lions, in hunting.

His moral virtues were not inferior to his other accomplishments. Upon his exaltation to the empire, he forgave an infinite number of debts due to the treasury, from individuals and provinces; and he gave the estates of condemned persons to the public, instead of appropriating hem to himself. His moderation and clemency appeared by pardoning the injuries which he had received

received when he was a private man. One day meeting a person who had formerly been his most inveterate enemy, "My good friend," cried he, "you have escaped, for I am now Emperor." He had so great a veneration for the senate, and was so careful of not introducing unworthy persons into it, that he told the captain of his guard, when he made him a senator, that he had no honours in his gift equal to what he then bestowed. To his friends he was affable, and gentle to persons of meaner stations; he relieved their wants, and visited them in sickness; it being his constant maxim, that he was an emperor not for his own good, but for the benefit of mankind.

These virtues, however, were contrasted by a strange mixture of vices, most of which arose from a weakness of resolution. Thus he is represented as proud and vain-glorious, envious and detractive, hasty and revengeful. He permitted the revival of the persecution against the Christians, and shewed many instances of an irritable disposition, which it was the whole study of his life to correct or to conceal.

But whatever Adrian's private character might have been, his conduct as an emperor appears in many respects admirable; his public transactions were dictated by sound policy, and the most disinterested wisdom. He was scarcely settled on the throne, when several of the northern barbarians, the Alani, the Sarmatians, and the Dacians, began to make devastations on the empire. These hardy nations, by their desultory incursions, began to be truly formidable to Rome. Adrian wished to have contracted the limits of the empire, that he might be freed from their attacks; but his friends dissuading him, he contented

tented himself with breaking down the bridge over the Danube, which his predecessor had built, sensible that the same passage which was open to him, was equally convenient to his barbarous neighbours.

While he was employed in compelling these nations to submission, a conspiracy, concerted by four persons of consular dignity, was discovered against his life; but their designs being detected, the conspirators were put to death, by order of the senate. Adrian took great pains to clear himself from the imputation of having had any hand in their execution; but, in order entirely to suppress the murmurs of the people upon this head, he distributed large sums of money among them, and entertained them with magnificent shows in the amphitheatre.

After a short stay at Rome, which was employed in regulating public affairs, he prepared to visit and take a view of his whole empire.
A. D. 121.
It was one of his maxims, that an emperor ought to imitate the sun, which diffuses warmth and vigour over all parts of the earth. He therefore took with him a splendid court, and a considerable force, and entered the province of Gaul, where he numbered the inhabitants. From Gaul he went into Germany, thence to Holland, and then passed over to Britain. There, reforming many abuses, and reconciling the natives to the Romans, for the better security of the southern parts of the kingdom, he built a wall of wood and earth, extending from the river Eden in Cumberland, to the Tyne in Northumberland, to prevent the incursions of the Picts, and other barbarous nations to the north. From Britain, returning through

through Gaul, he directed his journey to Spain, where he was received with great joy, as being a native of that country. There, wintering in the city of Tarragona, he called a meeting of the deputies from all the provinces, and ordained many things for the benefit of the nation. From Spain, returning to Rome, he continued there for some time, in order to prepare for his journey into the East, which was hastened by a new invasion of the Parthians His approach compelling the enemy to peace, he pursued his travels without molestation. Advancing to Asia Minor, he turned out of his way to visit the famous city of Athens. There making a considerable stay, he was initiated in the Eleusinian mysteries, accounted the most sacred in the Pagan mythology; and took upon him the office of archon or chief magistrate of the place. In this place also, he remitted the severity of the christian persecution, at the suggestion of Granianus, the pro-consul of Asia; and even thought of receiving CHRIST among the number of the Gods. After a winter's continuance at Athens, he went over to Sicily; and visited Ætna, and the other curiosities of the place. Returning thence once more to Rome, after a short stay he prepared ships and crossed over to Africa. There he spent much time in reforming abuses, and regulating the government; in deciding controversies, and erecting magnificent buildings. Among the rest, he ordered Carthage to be rebuilt; calling it, after his own name, Adrianople. Revisiting Rome, where he stayed but a very little time, he travelled a second time into Greece, passed over into Asia Minor, went thence to Syria, and then traversed Pales-

 tine,

tine, Arabia, and Egypt, where he caused Pompey's tomb to be rebuilt and beautified. He also gave orders for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, which was performed with great expedition, by the assistance of the Jews, who now began to conceive hopes of being restored to their long-lost kingdom. But these expectations only served to aggravate their calamities; for, being incensed at the privileges which were granted the pagan worshippers in their new city, they fell upon the Romans and Christians dispersed throughout Judea, and unmercifully put them all to the sword. To this cruel and desperate undertaking they were chiefly incited by one Barcocab, an impostor; who declared, that he himself was the star foretold by Balaam; and that he was come down as a light from Heaven to rescue them from bondage. Adrian was at Athens when this dangerous insurrection began; wherefore, sending a powerful body of men, under the command of Julius Severus, against them, this general obtained many signal, though bloody, victories over the insurgents; and in two years concluded the war, with the destruction of near six hundred thousand men. The remaining Jews were banished, and by a public decree forbidden to come within a view of their native soil.

This insurrection was soon after followed by a dangerous irruption of the barbarous nations to the northward of the empire; who entering Media with great fury, and passing through Armenia, carried their devastations as far as Cappadocia. Adrian, preferring peace upon any terms, to an unprofitable war, with singular impolicy, bought them off by large sums of money; so that they returned

returned peaceably into their native wilds, to enjoy their plunder, and meditate fresh invasions.

The emperor having now spent thirteen years in travelling through his dominions, and reforming the abuses of the empire, resolved, at length, to return and end his days at Rome. Nothing could be more grateful to the people than his present resolution of coming to reside among them; they received him with the loudest demonstrations of joy; and, though he now began to grow old and unwieldy, he remitted not the least of his former assiduity and attention to the public welfare. His chief amusement was in conversing with the most celebrated men in every art and science; frequently boasting that he thought no kind of knowledge inconsiderable, nor to be neglected either in his private or public capacity. This desire of knowledge was laudable, if kept within bounds: but he seemed to affect universal excellence; and even envied all, who aspired at equal reputation in any of the arts with himself. It is said, that he ordered Apollodorus, the architect, to be put to death, only for too freely remarking upon the errors of some structure erected from the emperor's designs. Favorinus, however, a man of great reputation for philosophy, happening one day to dispute with him upon some philosophical subject, had the good sense to acknowledge himself overcome. His friends blamed him for thus giving up the argument, when he might easily have pursued it with success: "How," replied Favorinus, "would you have me "contend with a man who is master of thirty le-"gions?" But whatever might have been his weak-

A. D. 135.

U. C. 883.

ness in aiming at universal reputation, he was, in no part of his reign, remiss in attending the duties of his exalted station. He ordered the knights and senators never to appear in public, but in the proper habits of their orders. He forbade masters to kill their slaves, as had been before allowed; but ordained that they should be tried by the laws enacted against capital offences.—A law so just, had he done nothing more, was enough to have ensured his reputation with posterity, and to have made him dear to mankind.

In such cases he consumed the greatest part of his time; but, at last, finding the duties of his station daily increasing, and his own strength proportionally diminishing, he resolved to adopt a successor, whose merits might deserve, and whose courage secure, his exaltation. After many deliberations, he made choice of Lucius Commodus, whose bodily infirmities, however, rendered him unfit for a trust of such importance. Of this, after some time, Adrian appeared sensible; declaring, that he repented of having chosen so feeble a successor, and saying, "that he had leaned against a mouldering wall." However, Commodus soon after dying, the emperor immediately adopted Marcus Antoninus, afterwards surnamed Pius; but previously obliged him to adopt two others, namely, Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, who afterwards succeeded to the empire.

While he was thus careful in appointing a successor, his bodily infirmities daily increased; and, at length, his pain becoming insupportable, he vehemently desired that some of his attendants would dispatch him. Antoninus, however, would by no means permit any of his domestics

to

to be guilty of so great an impiety, and used all the arts in his power to reconcile the emperor to sustain life, but with so little effect, that Adrian frequently cried out in his agonies, "How "miserable a thing it is to seek death, and not "to find it!" In this deplorable situation, he resolved on going to Baiæ; where the torture of his diseases increasing, they affected his understanding, so that he gave orders that several persons should be put to death; which, however, Antoninus took care to prevent. Continuing, for some time, in excruciating pain, the emperor was at last resolved to observe no regimen, often saying, "that kings died merely by the multitude of their physicians." This conduct served to hasten that death he seemed so earnestly to desire; and it was probably joy upon its approach, which dictated the celebrated stanzas which are so well known*, in repeating which he expired, in the sixty-second year of his age, after a prosperous reign of twenty-two years, during which he reduced the laws of the empire into one regular code.

A.D. 139.

* Animula vagula, blandula,
Hospes comesque corporis;
Quæ nunc abibis in loca?
Pallidula, frigida, nudula;
Nec ut soles dabis jocos.

Thus translated by Mr. Pope:

Oh fleeting spirit, wandering fire,
That long has warm'd my tender breast,
Wilt thou no more my frame inspire?
No more a pleasing cheerful guest?
Whither, ah! whither art thou flying,
To what dark, undiscover'd shore?
Thou seem'st all trembling, shivering, dying,
And wit and humour are no more.

CHAP XIX.

The Reigns of Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Commodus, and Pertinax.

ANTONINUS, who now succeeded to the imperial throne, was born in the city of Nismes in Gaul. His father was a nobleman of an ancient family, who had enjoyed the highest honours of the state. At the time of the death of Adrian, he was above fifty years old, and had passed through many of the most important offices of the state, with great integrity and application. His virtues in private life were only rendered more conspicuous by his exaltation. He was distinguished for justice, clemency, and moderation; for purity of morals, and piety to the gods.

In the beginning of his reign, he made it his particular study, to promote only the most deserving to employments; he moderated many imposts and tributes, and commanded that all should be levied without partiality or oppression. His liberality was such, that he even parted with all his own private fortune to relieve the distresses of the necessitous. Against which, when Faustina, the empress, seemed to remonstrate, he reprehended her folly, alleging, that as soon as he was possessed of the empire, he quitted all private interests; and having nothing of his own, all properly belonged to the public. He seldom incurred any expence by travelling, and avoid-

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ed all idle pageantry and ostentation. By this frugal conduct, he was the better enabled to suppress all the insurrections that happened during his reign, either in Britain *, in Dacia, or in Germany. Thus he was at once reverenced and loved by mankind; being accounted rather a patron, and father of his subjects, than a master and commander. Ambassadors were sent to him from the remotest parts of Hyrcania, Bactria, and India, to solicit his alliance and friendship; and some desiring him to appoint them a king, whom they seemed proud to obey. He shewed not less paternal care toward the oppressed Christians; in whose favour he declared, "that if any should proceed to disturb them, merely upon the account of their religion, that such should undergo the same punishment which was intended against the accused.

This clemency was attended with no less affability and freedom; but, at the same time, he was upon his guard, that his indulgence to his friends should not tempt them to insolence or oppression. He therefore took care that his courtiers should not sell their favours, nor take any gratuity from their suitors. In the time of a great famine in Rome, he provided for the wants of the people, and maintained great numbers with bread and wine during its continuance. When any of his subjects attempted to inflame him with a passion for military glory, he would answer, "that he more desired the preservation of one subject than the destruction of a thousand enemies."

A. D. 155. U. C. 903.

* He built a wall of turf in Britain to defend it from the incursions of the barbarians in the north.

He

He was an eminent rewarder of learned men, whom he invited from all parts of the world, and raised to wealth and honour. Among the rest, he sent for Appollonius, the famous stoic philosopher, to instruct his adopted son, Marcus Aurelius, whom he had previously married to his daughter. Apollonius being arrived at Rome, the emperor desired his attendance; but the other arrogantly answered, that it was a scholar's duty to wait upon the master, and not the master's upon the scholar. To this reply, Antoninus only returned with a smile, "that it was surprising how Apollonius, who made no difficulty of coming from Greece to Rome, should think it so hard to walk from one part of Rome to another;" and immediately sent Marcus Aurelius to him. While this exemplary prince was thus employed, in making mankind happy, in directing their conduct by his own example, or reproving their follies with the keenness of rebuke, he was seized with a violent fever at Lorium, a pleasure-house at some distance from Rome; where finding himself sensibly decaying, he ordered his friends and principal officers to attend him. In their presence he confirmed the adoption of Marcus Aurelius, without once naming Lucius Verus, who had been joined by Adrian with him in the succession; then commanding the golden statue of fortune, which was always in the chamber of the emperors, to be removed to that of his successor, he expired, in the seventy-fifty year of his age, after a prosperous reign of twenty-two years and almost eight months; during which he had rather studied to defend the Roman empire, than to enlarge its boundaries, to render his people happy, than to make them feared.

The

The loss of such an emperor, may naturally be supposed to excite universal sorrow. His adopted son, Marcus Aurelius, pronounced his funeral eulogy; and though left sole successor to the throne, admitted Lucius Verus as his associate and equal. Thus Rome, for the first time, saw itself governed by two sovereigns of equal power, but of very different merit and pretensions. Aurelius was the son of Annius Verus, of an ancient and illustrious family, which claimed its original from Numa. Lucius Verus was the son of Commodus, who had been adopted by Adrian, but died before he succeeded to the throne. Aurelius was as remarkable for his virtues and acplishments, as his partner in the empire was for his ungovernable passions and debauched morals. The one was an example of the greatest goodness and wisdom; the other of ignorance, indolence, and dissipation.

A.D. 163.

U.C. 911.

Scarcely were the two emperors settled on the throne, when the empire was attacked on every side by the barbarians. The Catti invaded Germany and Rætia; ravaging all with fire and sword; but were, after some time, repelled by Victorinus. The Britons, likewise, revolted, but were repressed by Califurnius; but the Parthians, under their king Vologesus, made an irruption more dreadful than either of the former; destroying the Roman legions in Armenia; then entering Syria, and driving out the Roman governor. In order to stop the progress of this barbarous invasion, Verus himself went in person, after receiving the most judicious advice, and being furnished with the ablest assistants by his colleague.

But these precautions were fruitless: Verus neglected every admonition; and, thoughtless of the urgency of his expedition, plunged into every kind of debauchery. These excesses on his journey brought on a violent fever, which his constitution with difficulty overcame; but nothing could correct his vicious inclinations. Upon his entering Antioch, he resolved to give indulgence to every appetite, without attending to the fatigues of war. There, in one of its beautiful suburbs, called Daphne, he rioted in excesses unknown even to the voluptuous Greeks; leaving the glory of the field to his lieutenants, who were sent to repress the enemy. These fought with great success. Statius Priscus took Artazata. Martius put Vologesus to flight, took Selucia, plundered and burnt Babylon and Ctesiphon, and demolished the magnificent palace of the kings of Parthia. In a course of four years, during which the war continued, the Romans penetrated far into the Parthian country, and entirely subdued it; but upon their return, their army was dreadfully reduced by pestilence and famine. Verus, however, resolved to enjoy the honours of a triumph, so hardly earned by others. Having appointed a king over the Armenians, and finding the Parthians entirely subdued, he assumed the title of Armenicus and Parthicus; and then returned to Rome in the greatest pomp and splendour.

During this long expedition, Aurelius was sedulously intent upon distributing justice and happiness to his subjects at home. He first applied himself to the regulation of public affairs, and to the correcting of such faults as he found

found in the laws and policy of the state. In this endeavour he shewed such singular respect for the senate, that the commonwealth seemed in a manner once more revived under his equitable administration. While thus gloriously occupied, he was daily mortified with accounts of the enormities of his colleague; but feigning himself ignorant of his excesses, he judged marriage to be the best method of reclaiming him; and therefore sent him his daughter Lucilla, a woman of great beauty, whom Verus married at Antioch. This, however, was found ineffectual; Lucilla proved of a disposition very unlike her father; and instead of correcting her husband's extravagances only contributed to inflame them. The return of Verus was still more fatal to the empire; for his army introduced the plague from Parthia, and disseminated the infection into all the provinces through which it passed; while this profligate wretch appeared equally insensible of humanity or shame. Indeed nothing could exceed the miserable state of the empire at this period. In the horrid picture was represented an emperor unawed by example, or the calamities surrounding him, giving way to unheard-of debaucheries;—a raging pestilence spreading terror and desolation through all parts of the western world;—earthquakes, famines, and inundations, such as had never before happened;—the products of the earth throughout all Italy devoured by locusts;—all the barbarous nations surrounding the empire—the Germans, the Sarmatians, the Quadi, and Marcomanni—taking advantage of its various calamities, and making irruptions even into Italy;—the priests exhausting every expedient that ignorance had ever invented, to propitiate the gods; and, to crown the whole.

whole, these enthusiasts, as if the impending calamities had not been sufficient, ascribed the distresses of the state to the impieties of the Christians alone; so that a violent persecution raged in all parts of the empire; in which Justin Martyr, St. Polycarp bishop of Smyrna, and an infinite number of others suffered martyrdom.

In this scene of universal tumult, desolation, and distress, there was nothing left but the virtues and the wisdom of one man, to restore tranquillity, and bring back happiness to the empire. Aurelius began his endeavours by marching against the Marcomanni and Quadi, taking Verus with him, who reluctantly left the sensual delights of Rome for the fatigues of a camp. They came up with the Marcomanni near the city of Aquileia, and, after a furious engagement, routed their whole army; then pursuing the fugitives across the Alps, overcame them in several contests; and at last, entirely defeating them, returned to Italy without any considerable loss. As the winter was far advanced, Verus determined upon going from Aquileia to Rome: in this journey he was seized with an apoplexy which put an end to his life, at the age of thirty-nine years, of which he had reigned nine in conjunction with Aurelius.

A.D. 171.

Aurelius, who had hitherto felt the fatigues not only of governing an empire, but of controlling his unworthy colleague, being now left to himself, began to act with greater diligence and success than ever. His first care was to marry his daughter Lucilla to Claudius Pompeianus, a man of moderate fortune and humble station, but eminent for his honesty, courage, and wisdom. He

He then left Rome to finish the war against the Marcomanni, who joining with the Quadi, the Sarmatians, the Vandals, and other barbarous nations, renewed hostilities with unusual rage and devastation. They had some time before attacked Vindex, præfect of the prætorian bands, and in a general battle near the Danube, destroyed no less than twenty thousand of his men. They even pursued the Romans as far as Aquileia, and would have taken the city, had not the emperor led his troops in person to oppose them. Aurelius having repulsed the enemy, continued his endeavours to prevent them from making future inroads. He spent in this laborious undertaking no less than five years, supporting the most dreadful fatigues, and supplying, by the firmness of his courage, the defects of a delicate constitution. The stoic philosophy in which he was imbued, had taught him a simplicity of living, and a contempt of danger, which served as an example to the whole army. At length Aurelius so wearied out the enemy with repeated attacks, that he constrained them to accept such terms of peace as he thought fit to propose, and thus returned in triumph to Rome.

This business being settled, he resumed his usual endeavours to benefit mankind by a further reformation of the internal policy of the state. He ordered that no inquiry should be made after the fortune of deceased persons who had been dead five years. He moderated the public expences, and lessened the number of shows and sports which were exhibited on the amphitheatre. He particularly took the poor under his protection; and found such pleasure in relieving their wants, that he considered his ability to supply

the dictates of his compassion, as one of the greatest happinesses of his life. He laboured incessantly to restrain the luxuries of the great; prohibiting the use of chariots and littars to persons of inferior station, and endeavouring by all means to correct the lewdness and disorders of women.

But, his laudable endeavours were soon interrupted by a renewal of the former wars. The barbarians no sooner perceived his army withdrawn, than they took up arms once more, and renewed their ravages with greater fury than before. They had now drawn over to their side all the nations from Illypricum, to the furthest parts of Gaul. Aurelius, therefore, again saw himself surrounded with difficulties; his army had before been wasted with the plague, and frequent engagements, and his treasures entirely exhausted. In order to remedy these inconveniencies, he encreased his forces by enlisting slaves, gladiators, and the banditti of Dalmatia.

To raise money, he sold all the moveables belonging to the empire, and all the rich furniture which had been deposited in the cabinets of Adrian. This sale, which continued for two months, produced so considerable a sum, as to defray all the expences of the war. His next effort was to march forward, and cross the Danube by a bridge of boats. He then attacked the enemy, gained several advantages, burnt their houses and magazines of corn, and received the submission of such as had inconsiderately joined in the invasion. The detail of his campaigns is little interesting; but one battle deserves to be particularised. It was begun by the

the enemy's slingers across a river, which induced the Romans to ford it, and make a great slaughter of those who attempted to defend its banks on the opposite side. The enemy, anticipating a pursuit, retired, having previously left some bodies of archers, covered by a squadron of horse, to skirmish with the Romans, as if they designed to stop their progress. The Romans, with inconsiderate valour, attacking this forlorn hope, pursued them among a chain of barren mountains; where they found themselves unexpectedly blocked up on every side. However, they continued fighting, notwithstanding the disadvantage of the place; but the enemy prudently declined engaging, not willing to leave that victory to chance, which they expected from delay. At length, the excessive heat of the inclosed situation, long-continued fatigue, and a violent thirst, totally disheartened the Roman legions: they could neither fight nor retreat. In this deplorable exigence, while sorrow and despair were their only companions, Aurelius ran through their ranks, and in vain endeavoured to rekindle their hopes and their courage. Nothing was heard but groans and lamentations; nothing seen but marks of terror and desolation. At this dreadful juncture, and just as the barbarians were ready to fall upon them, we are assured, by some writers, that the solemn prayers of a Christian legion then serving among them, produced such a fall of rain, as instantly refreshed the fainting army. The same clouds also which brought the Romans such seasonable relief, discharged such a terrible storm of hail accompanied with thunder, against the enemy, as astonished

A. D. 175.

U. C. 923.

tonished and confounded them; and made them an easy prey to the renovated courage of the legions of Aurelius.

Such are the circumstances of an engagement, acknowledged by pagan, as well as christian writers, only with this difference, that the latter ascribe the victor to their own, the former to the prayers of their emperor. Aurelius, however, seemed so sensible of miraculous assistance, that he immediately relaxed the persecutions against the Christians, and wrote to the senate in favour of their religion. After many violent conflicts, the barbarians sent to sue for peace; and obtained conditions more or less severe, as the emperor found them more or less disposed to revolt. But, while Aurelius was engaged in making final arrangements in this quarter, a fresh rebellion called him to the defence of his dominions at home.

Avidius Cassius was one of the emperor's favourite generals, and had been chiefly instrumental in obtaining the Roman successes in Parthia. His principal merit seemed to consist in his restoring the old discipline, and in pretending a violent regard for the commonwealth in its ancient form. But, in fact, all his seeming regard for freedom, was only to seize upon the liberties of his country for his own aggrandisement. Wherefore, finding the eastern army willing to support his pretensions, he proclaimed himself emperor in Syria. One of his chief artifices to procure popularity was, his giving out that he was descended from the famous Cassius, who had conspired against Cæsar; and, like him, he pretended, that his aims were for the re-establishment of the commonwealth of Rome. He also caused

caused it to be rumoured that Aurelus was dead, to whose memory he affected to shew the greatest respect. By such pretences he united a large body of men under his command, and, in a short time, brought all the countries from Syria to Mount Taurus under his subjection. These prosperous beginnings served to increase the emperor's activity, but not his apprehensions. He prepared to oppose him without any marks of uneasiness for the event; telling his soldiers, "that he would freely yield his empire to Avidius, if it should be judged conducive to the public good; for, as to his own part, the only fruits he had from his exaltation, were incessant labour and fatigue." "I "am ready," cried he, "to meet Avidius before "the senate, and before you; and to yield him "the empire without the effusion of blood, or "striking a blow, if it shall be thought for the "public good But Avidius will never submit "to such a tribunal; he who has been faithless to "his benefactor, can never rely upon any man's "professions. He will not even, in case of being "worsted rely upon me. And yet, my fellow-"soldiers, my only fear is—and I speak it with "the greatest sincerity---lest he should put an "end to his own life; or lest some, thinking to "do me a service, should hasten his death. The "greatest hope that I have, is to prove, that I "can pardon the most outrageous offences; to "make him my friend, in spite of his reluc-"tance; and to shew the world, that even civil "wars may have a happy issue."

In the mean time, Avidius strained every nerve to lure partisans, and in particular he endeavoured to win over the Greeks. But the love which all mankind bore the good emperor, frus-

trated his expectations in this quarter; and from this moment the tide of his fortune seemed to turn. His officers and soldiers soon began to regard him with contempt; and at last slew him, in less than four months after his revolt. His head was brought to the emperor, who received it with regret, and ordered it an honourable interment. The rest of the conspirators were treated with great lenity: some few were banished, but recalled soon after. This clemency was admired by some, and condemned by others; but the emperor little regarded the murmurs or the applause of the unthinking multitude. When some took the liberty of blaming his conduct, telling him, that Avidius would not have been so generous had he been conqueror; the emperor made this sublime reply, "I never served the "gods so ill, or reigned so irregularly, as to fear "Avidius could ever be conqueror."

Though Avidius was no more, yet Aurelius was anxious to bring those who had been misled by his example, to a proper sense of their duty. He therefore took a journey into the East, where in all places, he at once charmed them with his affability, raised their admiration by his clemency, instructed them by precept, and improved them by example. In this journey, the empress Faustina was unexpectedly seized with a violent distemper, and died. She was a woman, whose wanton life gave great scandal to the dignity of her station; however, her passive husband either could not, or at least affected not to see his enormities, but willingly admitted the ill-deserved honours, which the senate importunately decreed to her memory.

In his way to Rome, he visited Athens, where he

he conferred many honours on the inhabitants, and established professors in all the sciences, with munificent salaries for the encouragement of learning. Upon his landing in Italy, he quitted his soldier's habit, as did also his army; and made his entry into Rome in the gown which was usually worn in peace. As he had been absent almost eight years, he distributed to each citizen eight pieces of gold, and remitted all the debts due to the treasury for sixty years past. At the same time he nominated his son Commodus to succeed him in the empire, and made him a partner in his triumphal entry. He then retired for some time to a country seat, where, by the study of philosophy, he delighted his mind, and regulated his conduct; he usually called it his mother, in opposition to the court, which he considered as his step-mother. He also was frequently heard to say, "that the people were happy whose philosophers were kings, or whose kings were philosophers *." In fact, Aurelius was one of the most considerable men of his time, and his merits as a writer, of which there are proofs extant, would have insured him immortality. But, philosophy was not with him mere speculation; his tranquillity was such, that he was never observed to feel any emotion, nor to change countenance, either in joy or in sorrow. His chief masters were Appolonius of Chalcis, and Sextus Chæronensis, grandson to the famous Plutarch: these shared his bounty, as did all the learned men of his reign. He had, indeed, learned the art of so blending liberality with the most frugal economy, that he seemed ra-

* This sentiment contains more point than truth.

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ther the equitable guardian of another's wealth, than the possessor of his own; and gave with such a good grace that his manner enhanced his gifts.

Having once more restored prosperity to his subjects, and peace to mankind, he expected in the decline of life to rest from future toils; but it was his fortune to be ever employed. News was soon brought him, that the Scythians, and other barbarous nations of the North, were again in arms, and invading the empire with furious impetuosity. He, therefore, once more resolved to expose his aged person in the defence of his country, and made speedy preparations to oppose the barbarians. He requested the senate, for the first time, to advance money out of the public treasury; and though it was in his power to take what sums he thought proper without their consent, yet he would not violate an apparent right. The people, whose love to the emperor daily increased, finding him resolved to expose himself in a dangerous war, assembled before his palace, beseeching him not to depart, till he had given them instructions for their future conduct; so that if the gods should take him to themselves, they might, by his assistance, continue in the same paths of virtue, into which he had led them by his example. This was a request which Aurelius was highly pleased in obeying; he spent three whole days in giving them short maxims, by which they might regulate their lives; and, having finished his lectures, departed upon his expedition, amidst the prayers and lamentations of all his subjects.

In the progress of his campaigns he fought several battles, and generally prevailed by his prudence,

prudence, courage, and example. He built many forts, and so disposed his garrisons, as to keep all his barbarous neighbours in awe; but in the third year of the war, he was seized with the plague at Vienna. Nothing, however, could abate his desire of being beneficial to mankind; for, though his submission to the will of Providence made him meet the approaches of death with tranquillity, his fears for the youth and unpromising disposition of Commodus, his son and successor, seemed to give him great uneasiness, and aggravated the pangs of dissolution. Struggling with this apprehension, and fluctuating between hope and fear, he addressed his friends and the principal officers that were gathered round his bed; telling them, "that as his son was going to lose a father, he hoped he would find many fathers in them; that they would direct his youth, and give him proper instructions for the public benefit as well as his own." "Make "him more particularly sensible," continued the dying emperor, "that not all the riches and "honours of this world, are sufficient to satisfy "the luxury and ambition of a tyrant; nor are "the strongest guards and armies able to defend "him from the just reward of his crimes. Assure "him, that cruel princes never enjoy a long and "peaceful reign; and that all the real delights "of power, are reserved only for those whose cle-"mency and mildness have gained them the "hearts of the people. It must be yours to in-"form him, that obedience by constraint, is "never sincere; and that he who would expect "fidelity among mankind, must gain it from "their affections, not their fears. Lay before "him the difficulty, and yet the necessity, of

"setting

"setting bounds to his passions, as there are "none set to his power. These are the truths to "which he ought ever to attend: by steadily in-"culcating these, you will have the satisfaction "of forming a good prince, and the pleasure of "paying to my memory the noblest of all ser-"vices, since you will thus render it immortal." As he was speaking these last words, his voice faultered, and he died the day following, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, having reigned nineteen years and some days; a period much too short for the happiness of his people, but sufficiently long to establish his own reputation.

It seems as if the glory and prosperity of the Roman empire died with Aurelius. From this time we are to behold a train of emperors either vicious or impotent: we are to behold an empire grown too great, sinking by its own weight, surrounded by barbarous and successful enemies without, and torn by ambitious and cruel factions within; the principles of the times wholly corrupted; philosophy attempting to regulate the minds of men, without the aid of religion; and the warmth of patriotism, as well as the flame of genius, gradually verging to extinction.

A. D. 181, U. C. 929. Commodus mounted the throne with a partiality gained by his father's merits, But though he owed the empire to the adoption of Aurelius, many were of opinion, that he was the spurious issue of a gladiator; his own conduct afterwards, and the wanton character of his mother Faustina, having, perhaps, given rise to the report. He was now about nineteen years of age; his person was comely and robust; he was expert in all manly exercises; and

and threw the javelin and shot from the bow with such wonderful address, and certainty of aim, as almost exceeds credibility.

Happy had it been both for himself and mankind, had he cultivated the mental exercises with as much attention as those of the body. His whole reign, however, is but a tissue of wantonness and folly, cruelty and injustice, rapacity and corruption.

Though he behaved well for a short time after his accession; the levity of his temper, and the corrupt example of his favourite companions, soon led him to the basest and meanest pursuits. He went with his associates to taverns and brothels; spent the day in feasting, and the night in the most abominable debaucheries. He even committed incest with his own sisters. He sometimes went about the markets in a frolic, with small wares as a petty chapman; sometimes he imitated a horse-courser; and at other times he drove his own chariot in the habit of a slave.

The principal objects of his favour were also the companions of his pleasures or the ministers of his cruelty. He took little care of the government, committing all the conduct of it to one Perennius, a person chiefly remarkable for his avarice and cruelty. In consequence of the enormities of this minister, a conspiracy was formed against Commodus in the beginning of his reign, in which his sister Lucilla, with her husband Pompeianus, were principally concerned. The person employed to kill the emperor was one Quintianus, who coming up to him in a dauntless manner, and holding up his dagger, cried out, "The senate sends thee this." But this unguarded manner of proceeding frustrated his

his aim; for, one of the guards instantly seizing his arm, prevented the fatal blow; and he soon after made a discovery of all his accomplices. Lucilla, Pompeianus, and Quintianus, were executed: many other persons, wholly innocent, shared the same fate. In this manner Perennius proceeded; sacrificing numbers of the senate, as pretended conspirators, but in reality with a view of appropriating their estates and fortunes. At last, having grown extremely rich, he began to think of gaining the empire for himself, and made some progress in the attempt; but his design becoming apparent, Commodus seemed to awaken from his lethargy, and ordered both him and his sons to immediate execution.

Two conspiracies, thus discovered and punished, served only to render the emperor more cruel and suspicious; and these cruelties begot new revolts. One Maternus, at the head of a numerous banditti, wasted Spain and Gaul, and resolved to attempt the empire itself. In order to effect this, he ordered some of his soldiers to mix with the emperor's guards, and then assassinate him: but his own party, in hopes of advantage, betrayed their employer, and he was executed, with many others, soon after. It was about this time also, that Cleander, the emperor's chief favourite, fell a sacrifice to the indignation of the populace, for his haughty carriage towards them. Another favourite, and soon after a third, were put to death by the emperor's command. To these succeeded the murder of his wife Crispina, and his father's cousin-german Faustina, and numberless others, whose virtues, or fortunes, rendered them obnoxious to his capricious cruelty. If any person desired to be revenged

venged on an enemy, by bargaining with Commodus for a sum of money, he was permitted to destroy him in such manner, as he thought proper. He commanded a person to be cast to the wild beasts, for reading the life of Caligula in Suetonius: he ordered another to be thrown into a burning furnace, for accidentally over-heating his bath. He would sometimes, in a frolic, cut off men's noses, under a pretence of shaving their beards; yet he was himself so jealous of all mankind, that he was obliged to be his own barber.

In the midst of these cruelties his vanity never forsook him. Not content with numberless titles, which his flattering senate were daily offering, he assumed such as were most agreeable to himself. He, at one time, commanded himself to be styled Hercules, the son of Jupiter; and, the better to imitate that hero, he carried a club and dressed himself in a lion's skin. But to amuse the imagination as far as possible, and that he might appear to destroy giants and monsters, as the former had done, he dressed up several poor men and cripples, who were found begging in the streets, like monsters, giving them sponges to throw at him instead of stones, till falling furiously among them with his club, he destroyed them all. When tired of the Herculean habit, he assumed that of an Amazon; and at last, became so abandoned as to forsake his palace and live in a fencing school.

During these irregularities and excesses, which it is astonishing mankind could be so pusillanimous as to endure, the barbarians on the frontiers of the empire were daily gaining ground: and, though his lieutenants were successful against

the Britons, the Moors, the Dacians, the Germans, and Pannonians; yet the empire was daily declining; since their numbers seemed to increase by defeat; so that neither treaties could bind, nor victories repel them. In the mean time, the emperor's actions became so odious to all mankind, and so contemptible to the citizens of Rome, that his death was ardently desired. At length, resolving to fence naked before the people, as a common gladiator, Lætus his general, Electus his chamberlain, and Marcia a concubine, of whom he always appeared excessively fond, remonstrated with him on the indecency of such behaviour. Their advice, however, was attended with no other effect, than that of incensing him against them, and inciting him to their destruction. It was his method, like that of Domitian, to set down the names of all such as he intended to put to death, in a roll which he carefully kept by him. However, happening to lay the roll on his bed, while he was bathing in another room, it was taken up by a little boy, whom he passionately loved. The child, after playing with it for some time, brought it to Marcia, who was instantly alarmed at the contents. She immediately discovered her terrors to Lætus and Electus, who perceiving their dangerous situation, instantly determined on the tyrant's death. After some deliberation, it was agreed upon to dispatch him by poison. In consequence of this, a draught was administered to him by the hands of Marcia, which beginning to operate, threw him into a heavy slumber. In order to conceal the fact, she immediately caused the company to retire, under pretence of allowing him rest; but finding him awake soon after,

and

and taken with a violent vomiting, she hastily introduced a young man, named Narcissus, whose name appeared in the roll of proscription. This person, in order to save himself, boldly assisted Marcia in strangling the emperor, who died in the thirty-first year of his age, after an impious reign of more than twelve years.

The assassination of Commodus was con- A.D.
ducted with such secrecy and expedition, 192.
that few were, at that time, acquainted U.C.
with the real circumstances of his death. 940.
His body was wrapped up as a bale of useless furniture, and carried through the guards, most of whom were either drunk or asleep.

Previously to the blow which was to deliver the world from such a wretch, the conspirators had fixed upon a successor. This was Helvius Pertinax, whose virtues and courage rendered him worthy of the most exalted station, and who had passed through many changes of fortune. He was originally the son of an entranchised slave, called Ælius, who only gave him so much learning as would qualify him for keeping a little shop in the city. He then became a schoolmaster; afterwards studied the law; and then became a soldier: in which last station his behaviour was such, as to raise him to the post of captain of a cohort against the Parthians. Being thus introduced to arms, he went through the usual gradations of military preferment in Britain and Mæsia, until he became the commander of a legion under Aurelius. In this station he so signalized himself against the barbarians, that he was made consul, and governor successively of Dacia, Syria, and Asia Minor. In the reign of Commodus he was banished, but soon after

recalled, and sent into Britain to reform the abuses of the army. In this employment his usual good fortune attended him; and, he was thence removed into Africa, on the same business. Leaving Africa, and fatigued with an active life, he betook himself to retirement. But Commodus, willing to keep him near Rome, made him præfect of the city; which employment he filled, when the conspirators determined to invest him with the purple.

Having been advanced by Commodus, he had only the greater reason to be afraid of falling as an object of his suspicions. When, therefore, the conspirators repaired to his house by night, he considered their arrival as a command from the emperor for his death; and was not a little surprised on being undeceived.

Pertinax having accepted the offer which was made him, was carried to the camp, and proclaimed emperor; and soon after the citizens and senate consented, the joy at the election of their new sovereign being scarcely equal to that for the death of the tyrant, whom they pronounced a parricide, an enemy to the gods, his country, and all mankind; and commanded that his corpse should rot upon a dunghill.

When Pertinax began his reign, he was in the sixty-eighth year of his age; but, short as it was, all its principal passages were full of honour. He punished those who had served to corrupt the late emperor, and disposed of their ill-got possessions to public uses. He attempted to restrain the licentiousness of the prætorian bands, and put a stop to the injuries and insolence they committed against the people. He sold most of the buffoons and jesters of Commodus as slaves.
He

He continually frequented the senate, and never refused an audience even to the meanest of the people. His success in foreign affairs was equal to his internal policy. When the barbarous nations abroad had certain intelligence that he was emperor, they immediately laid down their arms; well knowing the opposition they were to expect from so experienced a commander. His great error was avarice, which, in some measure, served to hasten his ruin.

The prætorian soldiers, whose manners he had attempted to reform, having been long corrupted by the indulgence and profusion of their former monarch, began to hate him, for the parsimony and discipline he had introduced among them. They therefore resolved to dethrone him; and, for that purpose, declared Maternus, an ancient senator, emperor, and endeavoured to carry him to the camp to proclaim him. Maternus, however, was too just to the merits of Pertinax, and too faithful a subject, to concur in their seditious designs; escaping out of their hands, he fled, first to the emperor, and then out of the city. They then nominated one Falco, another senator, whom the senate would have ordered for execution, had not Pertinax interposed, who declared, "that, during his reign, no senator should suffer death."

The prætorian soldiers having now gone too far to recede, resolved unanimously to seize openly and boldly upon the emperor and empire at once. They accordingly, in a tumultuous manner, marched through the streets of Rome, and entered the palace without opposition. Such was the terror of their approach, that the greatest part of the emperor's attendants forsook him; while

 those

those who remained, earnestly intreated him to flee to the body of the people, and interest them in his defence. But he rejected that advice, declaring, "that it was unworthy his imperial dignity, and all his past actions, to save himself by flight." Having thus resolved to face the rebels, he had some hopes that his presence alone would terrify and confound them; but neither virtue nor dignity were any longer the objects of veneration among those corrupted bands. One Thausus, a Tungrian, struck him with his lance on the breast, crying out "The soldiers send you "this." Pertinax finding his destruction certain, covered his head with his robe and sunk down, mangled with a multitude of wounds. Electus, and some others of his attendants, who attempted to defend him, were also slain; but his son and daughter escaped. Thus, after a reign of three months, Pertinax fell a sacrifice to the licentious fury of the Prætorian army, which he had attempted to bring back to discipline and order. From the number of his adventures, he received the appellation of the Tennis-ball of Fortune; and certainly no man ever passed through such a variety of situations, with so blameless a character in each.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

The Reigns of Didius Julius, Septimus Severus, Caracalla and Geta, Oppilius Macrinus, Heliogabalus, and Alexander.

AFTER committing this horrible outrage, the soldiers retired with great precipitation to their companions, and immediately fortified their camp, expecting to be attacked by the citizens. Two days, however, having passed without any attempt of that kind. they became more insolent; and finding themselves in the unmolested possession of power, they made proclamation that they would sell the empire to the highest bidder. Sulpician and Didius, were the only two persons who accepted their invitation, and entered into the competition proposed. The former was of consular dignity, præfect of the city, and son-in-law to the late emperor Pertinax: the latter likewise of consular rank, a great lawyer, and the wealthiest man in the city. He was sitting with some friends at dinner, when the proclamation was published: and being charmed with the prospect of unbounded power, immediately rose from the table and hastened to the camp. Sulpician had got there before him; but he being outbid by Didius, the empire was literally knocked down to the latter for 6250 drachmas to be immediately paid to each of the prætorian soldiers. From the camp he was attended by his new electors into the

A.D. 192. U.C. 940.

the city; the whole body of his guards, which consisted of ten thousand men *, being ranged around him in such order, as if they had rather prepared for battle than a peaceable ceremony.

Upon being conducted to the senate-house, he addressed the few senators who were present in a very laconic speech: "Fathers, you want an "emperor, and I am the fittest person you can "choose." This speech being backed by the army, of necessity succeeded. The choice of the soldiers was confirmed by the senate; and Didius was acknowledged emperor, now in the fifty-seventh year of his age.

No sooner was he seated on the throne, than he gave himself up to ease and inactivity, utterly regardless of the duties of his station. He was mild and gentle indeed; but that avarice by which he became opulent, still followed him in his exaltation. In consequence of this, the soldiers who elected him, soon began to detest him; and the people also, against whose consent he was chosen, were not less inimical. Whenever he issued from his palace, they openly poured forth their imprecations against him. Didius, however, patiently bore all their reproaches, sometimes beckoning to them to approach him, and testifying his regard by every kind of submission.

While Didius was thus contemptuously treated at home, two valiant generals, in different parts of the empire, disclaimed his authority; each boldly resolving to contend for the throne, by the assistance of the troops they commanded.

* The whole sum Didius was to pay for the empire amounted to about two millions of our money.

These

These were Pescennius Niger, governor of Syria; and Septimius Severus, commander of the German legions. Niger was beloved by the people for his clemency and valour: and the report of his proposing Pertinax for his model, and resolving to revenge his death, gained him universal esteem among all ranks. His army in Syria having proclaimed him emperor, he was, shortly after, acknowledged as such by all the kings and potentates in Asia, who sent their ambassadors to him as their lawful prince. The pleasure of thus being treated as monarch, in some measure retarded his endeavours to secure his title. Entirely satisfied with the homage of those about him, he neglected the opportunities of suppressing his rivals, and gave himself up to feasting and luxury.

The conduct of Severus, an African by birth, was very different. Being proclaimed by his army, he began by promising to revenge the death of Pertinax, and took upon him his name. He next secured the fidelity of all the strong places in his province, and then resolved, with the utmost expedition, to march with his whole force directly to Rome.

Didius, who had disregarded the attempts of Niger, was greatly alarmed at those of Severus. He first, with many solicitations, procured the senate to proclaim him a traitor; and then applied himself to make the necessary provisions to oppose him, in which he found nothing but disappointment. The cohorts that elected him, were enervated by vice and luxury; the people detested his cause; and the cities of Italy had long been disused to the art of war. Some advised him to march forward, and meet Severus, as he was crossing the Alps: others

were for sending the generals upon that expedition. The unfortunate Didius, unequal to the task of empire, and confounded with the multiplicity of counsels, at last resolved, with the concurrence of the senate, to make Severus an offer of being his partner in the empire; but this was rejected with contempt.

The senate too, perceiving the timidity and weakness of their present master, began to abandon him, declaring, that he who could not defend the empire, was unworthy to govern it. Didius vainly endeavoured to reduce them to their duty, first by entreaties, and then by threats; but these only served to hasten his destruction. The fathers unanimously decreed, that Didius should be deprived of the empire, and that Severus should be proclaimed in his stead; and then they ordered him to be slain. The messengers sent for this purpose to the palace, found Didius unarmed, and weeping among a few friends, who still adhered to his interest. When the executioners began to prepare for their fatal errand, he expostulated with them; conceiving that he had a right to enjoy his purchase for the natural period of his life, as he had been guilty of no crime. The executioners were neither able nor willing to enter into the merits of the cause; they presently led him into the secret baths of the palace, and obliging him to stretch his neck forward, after the manner of condemned criminals, struck off his head, and exposed it where he had formerly pleaded with great success.

Didius being thus dispatched, the senate sent ambassadors to Severus, yielding him obedience, and granting him the ensigns and the usual titles

of

of empire. Severus, who was now about forty-seven years of age, received them with all proper respect, and entertaining them honourably, continued his march towards Rome. As he came near the city, his first exertion of power was, to order all the prætorian soldiers, who had lately sold the empire, to meet him unarmed. These, though sensible of their danger, were obliged to comply, and accordingly came forward, with branches of laurel, as to welcome his approach. Severus, however, was not to be mollified with this forced submission: he commanded them to be instantly stripped of their military habits, deprived of the name and honour of soldiers, and banished a hundred miles from Rome. He then entered the city in military pomp, took possession of the palace, and promised the senate to conduct himself with clemency and justice. However, though he united great vigour with the most refined policy, yet his African cunning was considered as a particular defect in his character. He is celebrated for his wit, learning, and prudence; but stigmatised for perfidy and cruelty. In short, he seemed equally disposed to the performance of the greatest acts of virtue, and the most bloody severities.

Having settled affairs at Rome, he made all possible expedition to march against Niger, who was still considered, and honoured, as emperor of the East. After some indecisive conflicts, the last great battle that was fought between these two extraordinary men, was upon the plains of Issus, on the very spot where Alexander had formerly conquered Darius. The two armies encountered upon the plain, and the neighbouring mountains were covered with infi-nite

A. D. 195.

nite numbers of people, who were merely led by curiosity to become spectators of an engagement that was to determine the empire of the world. Severus at last prevailed, and Niger's head being struck off by some soldiers of the conquering army, was insultingly carried through the camp on the point of a lance.

This victory secured to Severus the possession of the throne. However, the Parthians, Persians, and some other neighbouring nations, took up arms, under a pretence of vindicating Niger's cause. The emperor marched against them in person, had many engagements with them, and obtained such signal victories, as enlarged the empire, and re-established peace in the east.

In Britain, Clodius Albinus, commander of the legions, still remained as an object of the jealousy of Severus, whom he determined to destroy. For this purpose he sent some assassins into Britain, under a pretence of carrying him letters, but in reality to dispatch him. Albinus being apprised of their designs, prevented their attempt by recurring to open force, and proclaiming himself emperor. Nor was he without a powerful army to support his pretensions; of which Severus being sensible, he bent his whole force to oppose him. From the east, he continued his course across the straits of Byzantium, to the most western parts of Europe, without intermission. Equally regardless of the most parching heats, and the most rigorous colds, he led his soldiers bareheaded over mountains covered with snow. Albinus informed of his approach, went to meet him with his forces to Gaul. Fortune seemed for some time variable; but at last a decisive battle was fought, generally

rally reckoned one of the most desperate recorded in the Roman history. It lasted from morning till night, without any seeming advantage on either side. At length the troops of Severus began to flee; and he happening to fall from his horse, the army of Albinus shouted victory. But, the engagement was soon renewed with vigour by Lætus, one of Severus's commanders, who came up with a body of reserve, designing to destroy both parties, and make himself emperor. This attempt, though aimed equally against both, turned out entirely to the advantage of Severus. He therefore again charged with such fury and execution, that he soon plucked the victory from those who but a short time before seemed conquerors; and pursuing them into the city of Lyons, took Albinus prisoner, and cut off his head; treating his dead body with insults that marked a sanguinary and revengeful temper. All the senators of the party of Albinus, who were slain in the battle, he ordered to be quartered; and such as were taken alive, were immediately executed.

Having thus, by means of his army, secured the possession of the empire; upon his return to Rome, he loaded his soldiers with rewards and honours; giving them such privileges as strengthened his own power, while they annihilated that of the state.

Not satisfied, however, with an inactive life, he resolved to give way to his natural turn for conquest, and to oppose his arms against the Parthians, who were then invading the frontiers of the empire. Having therefore committed the domestic policy to one Plautian, to whose daughter he married his son Caracalla.

A. D. 198.

calla, he set out for the east, and prosecuted the war with his usual expedition and success. He forced submission from the king of Armenia, destroyed several cities in Arabia Felix, landed on the Parthian coasts, took and plundered the famous city Ctesiphon, marched back through Palestine and Egypt, and at length returned to Rome in triumph.

During this interval, Plautian, who was left to direct the affairs of Rome, began to think of aspiring to the empire himself. He had previously been remarkably cruel to the Christians; and now he resolved to increase the number of his crimes by ingratitude and treason. Upon the emperor's return, he employed a tribune of the prætorian cohorts, of which he was the commander, to assassinate him; as likewise his son Caracalla. The tribune seemed cheerfully to undertake this dangerous office; but instead of putting it into execution, informed Severus of his favourite's treachery. The emperor at first received it as an improbable tale, and as the artifice of one who envied the fortune of Plautian; but the latter having been cajoled to furnish evidence against himself, he was run through the body with a sword by Caracalla, while humbly supplicating the pardon of the emperor.

Severus, having escaped this danger, spent a considerable time in visiting the cities of Italy, and distributing justice with the strictest impartiality. Being attentive to the preservation equally of all parts of the empire, he resolved to make an expedition into Britain, where the Romans were in danger of being destroyed, or compelled to abandon the province. After appointing his two sons Caracalla and Geta,

Geta, joint successors in the empire, and taking them with him, he landed in Britain, and immediately marched against the Caledonians, who had cruelly harrassed the Roman settlements. In this expedition, his army suffered prodigious hardships in pursuing the enemy, they were obliged to hew their way through intricate forests, to drain extensive marshes, and to form bridges over rapid rivers; so that he lost fifty thousand men by fatigue and sickness. He surmounted all these inconveniences with unremitting ardour; and prosecuted his successes with such vigour, that he compelled the enemy to sue for peace; which he granted upon their surrendering a considerable part of their country, together with all their arms and military preparations.

A. D. 208.
U. C. 956.

Having thus given peace to Britain, for its better security, he built that famous wall which still goes by his name, extending from the Frith of Clyder on the west, to the Frith of Forth, on the east. It was eight feet broad, and twelve feet high, planted with towers, at a mile distance from each other, and communicating by pipes of brass in the wall, which conveyed instructions from one garrison to another, with incredible dispatch. This great work being finished, he retired to York; where, partly through age and fatigue, and partly through grief for the irreclaimable life of Caracalla, he found himself daily declining. To add to the distress of his situation, he was informed, that the soldiers had revolted, and declared his son emperor. In this exigence, he seemed once more to recal his natural vigour; and ill as he was,

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commanded his son, with the tribunes and centurions, to be brought before him. Though all were willing to court the favour of the young emperor, such was the authority of Severus, that none dared to disobey. They appeared before him confounded and trembling, and implored pardon upon their knees. Upon which, putting his hand to his head, he cried out, "Know, that it is the head that governs, and "not the feet." However, soon perceiving his disorder to increase, and sensible that he could not recover, he began to moralise on his melancholy condition, and ordering his urn to be brought, in which his ashes were to be inclosed, "Little urn," said he, "thou shalt now contain "what the world could not contain." Then addressing his friends who stood near him, "When "I took the empire upon me, I found it declin-"ing, and exhausted: I now leave it strong and "lasting to my sons, if they prove virtuous; "but feeble and desperate, if otherwise." His
A. D. 211. pains now increasing, he called for poison; which being refused him, he so loaded his stomach with food, that it soon brought him to his end, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, and the eighteenth of his reign, in which he had displayed considerable talents and virtues, mixed with many blemishes.

His sons, Caracalla and Geta, left joint heirs to the empire, very early began to shew a mutual hatred to each other. Their only agreement was in resolving to deify their father; but soon after each sought to attach the senate and army to his own particular interest. In disposition, as well as views, they differed extremely: Caracalla was fierce and cruel to an extreme degree;

gree; Geta was mild and merciful: so that Rome soon found the dangerous effects of being governed by two princes of equal power and contrary inclinations.

But this opposition was of no long continuance; for Caracalla, being resolved to govern alone, furiously entered Geta's apartment, and followed by ruffians, slew him in his mother's arms. Having committed this fratricide, he issued with great haste, from the palace, crying out, "that his brother would have slain him; and that he was obliged, in self-defence, to retaliate the intended injury." He then took refuge among the prætorian cohorts, and, in a pathetic tone, began to implore their protection; and, in order to strengthen his interest, promised to bestow upon them the largesses usually given upon the election of new emperors. By such persuasives, the soldiers were induced to proclaim him sole emperor, and to stigmatise the memory of his brother Geta as a traitor, and an enemy to the commonwealth. The senators were soon after prevailed on, either through favour or fear, to approve of what had been done by the army; and Caracalla, now invested with undivided power, rendering his crime more detestable, by the grossest hypocrisy, affected to mourn for his brother, and ordered him to be adored as a god.

The enormities of Domitian and of Nero, were soon exceeded by this monster. Lætus, who first advised him to murder his brother, was the first who fell a sacrifice to his jealousy; his own wife, Plantina followed; and Papinian, the renowned civilian, was beheaded for refusing to

write in vindication of his cruelty; answering the emperor's request, by observing, "that it was much easier to commit a parricide, than to defend it." He commanded all governors to be slain whom his brother had appointed, and destroyed not less than two thousand of his adherents. Whole nights were spent in the execution of his bloody decrees; and the dead bodies of people of all ranks, were carried out of the city in carts, where they were burnt in heaps without the customary rites. Upon a certain occasion, he ordered his soldiers to draw their swords on a crowded audience in the theatre, only for discountenancing a charioteer, whom he happened to favour. Perceiving himself hated by the people, he publicly declared, "that he could insure his own safety, though not their love; so that he neither valued their reproaches, nor feared their hatred.

This safety in which he so much confided, was the protection of his soldiers. He had exhausted the treasury, drained the provinces, and committed a thousand acts of rapacity, merely to keep them stedfast in his interests; and now he resolved to lead them upon a visit through all the provinces of the empire. He first went into Germany, where, to oblige the natives, he dressed himself in the habit of the country. Thence, he travelled into Macedonia, where he pretended to be a great admirer of Alexander the Great; and among other extravagancies, caused a statue of that monarch to be made with two faces; one of which resembled Alexander, and the other himself. He was so corrupted by flattery that he

A.D. 213.

called

called himself Alexander; and affected the walk and gesture of that hero. Shortly after, arriving in Asia Minor, as he was viewing the tomb of Achilles, he felt the desire of imitating him in something: and one of his freedmen happening to die at that time, he used the same ceremonies that were performed at the tomb of Patroclus. Passing from thence into Egypt, he cut off numbers at once, in the amphitheatre at Alexandria, only for having passed some jests upon his person and vices. The slaughter, indeed, was so great, that the streams of blood tinged the waters of the Nile.

Going from thence into Syria, he invited Artabanus, king of Parthia, to a conference, desiring his daughter in marriage, and promising him the most honourable reception. In consequence of this, that king met him on a spacious plain, unarmed, and only attended with a vast concourse of his nobles. This was what Caracalla desired. Regardless of his promise, or the law of nations, he instantly surrounded him with armed troops, let in wild beasts among his attendants, and made a most terrible slaughter among them, Artabanus himself escaping with the utmost difficulty. For this vile treachery, Caracalla assumed the surname of Parthicus.

Upon his return to Rome, as if to shew how far ingenuity in vice and progress in crime could be carried, he became enamoured of the mother of Geta, and the wife of his father, and publicly married her; totally regardless of the censures and the sarcasms of mankind.

However, though he disregarded shame, he was not insensible of fear. He was ever uneasy,

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in the consciousness of being universally hated; and was continually consulting astrologers concerning his future destiny. Among others, he sent one of his confidents, named Maternianus, with orders to consult all the astrologers in the city concerning his end. Maternianus considered this as a proper time to get rid of Macrinus, a man of considerable eminence who was daily supplanting him in his master's favour. He therefore informed him by letter, as if from the astrologers, that Macrinus had a design against his life; and they consequently advised him to put the conspirator to death. This letter, amongst many others, happened to be delivered to the emperor, as he was preparing for a chariot race. However, as it never was his custom to interrupt his pleasures for his business, he gave the pacquet to Macrinus himself to peruse: to inform him of the contents when more at leisure. When Macrinus came to the letter which regarded himself, he was unable to contain his surprise and terror; and, secreting it, set about concerting in reality what he had been invidiously accused of, in order to secure himself. At length, he unbosomed himself to one Martial, a man of great strength, and a centurion of the guards, who hated the emperor from various motives, particularly for the death of a brother, whom Caracalla had ordered to be slain. Macrinus, therefore, prevailed upon him to attempt the tyrant's destruction, the very first favourable opportunity. Accordingly, as the emperor was riding out one day, near a little city called Carræ, he happened to withdraw himself privately, with only one page to hold his horse.

horse. Martial eagerly laid hold of the occasion, and running to him hastily, as if he had been called, gave Caracalla a mortal wound in the back. Having performed this daring deed, Martial, unconcernedly, returned to his troops; but retiring, by insensible degrees, he endeavoured to secure himself by flight. His companions, however, soon missing him, and the page giving information of what had been done, he was pursued and cut in pieces.

A.D. 217.

During the reign of this execrable tyrant, which continued six years, the empire was every day declining. Caracalla destroyed all discipline among the soldiers, and all subordination in the state.

The military, after a suspense of two days, chose for successor to the empire, Macrinus, who took all possible methods to conceal his being privy to Caracalla's murder. The senate confirmed their choice shortly after; and likewise that of his son Diadumenus, whom he took as a partner in the empire. Macrinus was fifty-three years old when he was invested with the purple: he was of obscure parentage: some say, by birth a Moor, who through the mere rotations of office, was now, by treason and accident, called to fill the throne. Little is recorded of this emperor, except his engaging in a bloody though undecided battle with Artabanus, king of Parthia, who came to take vengeance of the injury he had sustained in the late reign; however, this monarch, finding his real enemy dead, was content to make peace, and returned into Parthia. Something is also said of the severity of Macrinus's discipline: for to such a pitch of licentiousness was the Roman army

army now arrived, that the most gentle inflictions were looked upon as a severity. It was this attempt at discipline, however, together with the artifices of Mœsa, grandmother to Heliogabalus, the natural son of Caracalla, that caused the emperor's ruin. Heliogabalus was priest of a temple dedicated to the Sun, in Emesa, a city of Phœnicia, and though but fourteen years old, was greatly loved by the army, for the beauty of his person, and the memory of his father, whose indulgence they gratefully remembered. This was soon perceived by the grandmother, who being very rich in gold and jewels, gave liberal presents among them, while they frequently repaired to her temple, both from the garrison in the city, and the camp of Macrinus. This intercourse growing every day more frequent, and the soldiers being disgusted with the severities of Macrinus, they began to think of electing Heliogabalus in his stead. Accordingly, sending for him to their camp, he was immediately proclaimed; and such were the hopes of his virtues, that all men began to espouse his interest.

Macrinus, who at this time was pursuing his pleasures at Antioch, on hearing of the insurrection, thought it sufficient to send his lieutenant Julian, with some legions, against the revolters. However, these, like the rest, soon declared for Heliogabalus, and slew their general. On which Macrinus resolved, with his son, to march directly against the seditious legions, and force them to their duty. Both parties met on the confines of Syria; the battle was for some time furious and obstinate; but at last Macrinus was overthrown, and obliged to seek safety by flight.

His

His principal aim was to reach Rome, where he knew his presence was desired; but unfortunately falling sick at the city of Chalcedon, his pursuers overtook him there, and put him to death, with his son Diadumenus, after a short and undistinguished reign of one year and two months. A. D. 218. U. C. 966.

The appointment of the army, as usual, influencing the decision of the senate and citizens of Rome, Heliogabalus ascended the throne at the age of fourteen; and, as must naturally be expected, was soon surrounded by flatterers, and entirely directed by his favourites. As he is described by historians, he appears a monster of sensuality; his short life, therefore, is but a tissue of effeminacy, lust, folly, and extravagance. He married, in the small space of four years, six wives, and divorced them all: he even assumed the quality of a woman, and married one of his officers; after that, he took for husband one Hierocles, a slave, whom he suffered to beat him severely when guilty of any excess, all which he endured with great patience, saying, that it was the duty of a wife to submit to her husband. He built a temple to the Sun, and married his divinity to Pallas, and shortly after to the Moon. His palace was a place of rendezvous for all the prostitutes of Rome, whom he called his fellow-soldiers, and companions in the field. He was so fond of the sex, that he carried his mother with him to the senate-house, and demanded that she should always be present when matters of importance were debated. He even went so far as to build a senate-house for women, with suitable orders, habits, and distinctions, of which his mother A. D. 219.

was

was made president; but all their debates turned upon the fashions of the day, and the different formalities to be used at giving and receiving visits. To these follies he added great cruelty and boundless prodigality. His suppers generally cost six hundred, and often three thousand pounds sterling: he always dressed in cloth of gold and purple, enriched with precious stones, and never wore the same habit twice; while his palace, his chambers, and his beds, were all furnished with the richest stuffs, covered with gold and jewels. Whenever he took horse, all the way between his apartment and the place of mounting, was covered with gold and silver dust strewn at his approach. In short, all his government, actions, dress, and furniture, testified the extravagant folly of a vicious boy. Thus he was seen at one time driving elephants yoked to his chariot; at another, mastiff dogs: at one time he was drawn by lions; at another, by four naked women. He was so extravagantly whimsical, that he caused a collection to be made of ten thousand pounds weight of spiders, in testimony of the magnitude of the city*. Even his guests were invited in the same spirit of absurdity; thus he gave a feast to eight old men, eight bald men, eight blind men of one eye, eight lame with the gout, eight deaf men, eight blacks, and eight so fat that they could scarce sit at the same table. These were the tricks of a child, and might pass for harmless follies, had he not united malevolence with every

* According to modern ideas, this would rather have been a proof of want of cleanliness.

entertain-

entertainment. He was often seen to smother his guests in rooms filled with roses, and terrify them by letting loose wild beasts among them, previously deprived of their teeth and claws. It is even said, he strove to foretel what was to happen, by inspecting the entrails of young men sacrificed; and that he chose the most beautiful youths throughout Italy, to be slain for that horrid purpose.

Such excesses were soon perceived by his grandmother Mœsa, whose intrigues had first raised him to the throne; and who, under a pretence of freeing him from the cares of public business, persuaded him to adopt his cousin-german, Alexander, as his successor; and likewise to make him his partner in the consulship. Heliogabalus, however, had scarcely parted with power before he wished to resume it; but the virtues of this young prince had so greatly endeared the people and the army to him, that the attempt had like to have proved fatal to the tyrant. The prætorian soldiers mutinying, attempted to kill him as he was walking in his gardens, but he escaped from their fury. However, upon returning to their camp, they continued the sedition, requiring that the emperor should remove such persons from about him, as oppressed the subject, and contributed to contaminate himself. They required also the privilege of guarding Alexander themselves; and that none of the emperor's favourites or familiars should ever be permitted to converse with him. Heliogabalus was reluctantly obliged to comply; and conscious of the danger he was in, made preparations for death, when it should ar-

 rive,

rive, in a manner truly whimsical and peculiar. He built a lofty tower, with steps of gold and pearl, from whence to throw himself headlong in case of necessity. He also prepared cords of purple silk and gold, golden swords and daggers, and poison to be kept in boxes of emerald, in order to obtain what death he chose best. Thus fearing all things, but particularly suspicious of the designs of the senate, he banished them all out of the city. He next attempted to poison Alexander, and spread a report of his death; but perceiving the soldiers begin to mutiny, he immediately took him in his chariot to the camp, where he only experienced a fresh mortification, by finding all the acclamations of the army directed to his successor.

This raised his indignation, and excited his desire of revenge, which he openly menaced; but the soldiers were unwilling to give him time to put his designs in execution: they followed him directly to his palace, and pursued him from apartment to apartment, till at last he was found concealed in a privy. Having dragged him thence through the streets, with the most bitter invectives, and then dispatched him, they attempted once more to squeeze his pampered body into a privy; but not easily effecting this, they threw it into the Tiber, with heavy weights, that none might afterwards find or give it burial. Such was the just but ignominious death of Heliogabalus, in the eighteenth year of his age, after a detestable reign of four years. His mother was slain at the same time by the soldiers; as well as many of the opprobrious associates of his criminal pleasures.

Alexander

Alexander being declared emperor without opposition, the senate, with their usual adulation, were for conferring new titles upon him; but he modestly declined them all, alleging that titles were only then honourable when given to virtue, not to station. This outset was an happy omen of his future virtues; and few princes in history have been more commended by his contemporaries, or indeed more deserved commendation. To the most rigid justice he superadded the greatest humanity. He loved the good, and was a severe reprover of the lewd and infamous. His accomplishments were equal to his virtues: he was an excellent mathematician, geometrician, and musician; he was equally skilful in painting and sculpture; and in poetry, few of his time could equal him. In short, such were his talents, and such the solidity of his judgment, that, though but sixteen years old, he had all the premature wisdom of age.

A.D. 222.

U.C. 970.

The first part of his reign was spent in a reformation of the abuses of his predecessor; particularly in restoring the senators to their rank and influence. Among the number of his advisers, was his mother Mammæa, a woman eminent for her virtues and accomplishments, and who made use of her power as well to secure her son the affections of his subjects, as to procure them the most just administration. Among his ministers of state, the principal were, Ulpian the celebrated lawyer, and Sabinus the senator, denominated the Cato of his time. Merit only was the passport to his protection; nor would he permit offices or places to

be purchased for money: observing, "I cannot "bear to see merchants in authority; if I first "allow them to be such, I cannot after con-"demn their conduct: for how could I punish "the person who sold, when I permitted him "to be a buyer." He was therefore a rigid punisher of such magistrates as took bribes, saying, "that it was not enough to deprive such of their places; for their trusts being great, their lives in most cases ought to pay for a breach of their duty." On the contrary, he thought he could never sufficiently reward such as had been remarkable for their justice and integrity, keeping a register of their names, and sometimes asking such of them as appeared modest and unwilling to approach him, why they were so backward in demanding their reward? and why they suffered him to be in their debt?

His clemency extended even to the Christians, who had been punished in the former reign with unrelenting barbarity. Upon a contest between them and a company of cooks and vintners, about a piece of ground, which the one claimed as a place of public worship, and the other for exercising their respective trades, he decided the point by his rescript, in these words: "It is bet-"ter that God be worshipped there in any man-"ner, than that the place should be put to uses "of drunkenness or debauchery."

His abilities in war were not inferior to his assiduity in peace. The empire, which, from the remissness and debauchery of the preceding reigns, now began to be attacked on every side, wanted a person of vigour and conduct to defend it; and it found one in Alexander, who faced

faced the enemy wherever the invasion was most formidable, and, for a short time deferred its ruin. His first expedition, in the tenth year of his reign, was against the Parthians and Persians, whom he opposed with a powerful army. A. D. 232. His regularity and discipline were things almost unknown among the debauched soldiery: his camp resembled a well-regulated city; his soldiers were well clothed and armed; and his cavalry properly mounted, as in the best times of Rome. His own manner of living was like that of the meanest sentinel; wherever he dined or supped, he sat with his tent open, that all men might be witnesses of his abstemiousness. Success against the enemy was the reward of so much military virtue. The Persians were routed in a decisive engagement with great slaughter; the cities of Ctesiphon and Babylon were once more taken, and the Roman empire restored to its former limits. Upon his return to Antioch, his mother Mammæa sent for the famous Origen to be instructed by him in the principles of Christianity: and after discoursing with him for some time upon the subject, dismissed him with a proper safeguard to his native city of Alexandria. About the same time that Alexander was victorious in the east, Furius Celcus, his general, obtained a signal victory over the Mauritanians, in Africa; Varius Macrinus was successful in Germany; and Junius Palmatus returned with conquests from Armenia. However, the number of these victories only hastened the decline of the empire, which was wasted by the exertion of its remaining strength, and was now becoming little more than a splendid ruin.

About the thirteenth year of his reign, the Upper Germans and other northern nations began to pour down immense swarms of people upon the more southern parts of the empire. They passed the Rhine and the Danube with such fury, that all Italy was thrown into the utmost consternation. The emperor, ever ready to expose his person for the safety of his people, marched to stem the torrent, which he speedily effected. In the course of these successes, however, he was cut off by a mutiny among his own soldiers. The legions encamped about Moguntia, having been abominably corrupted during the reign of Heliogabalus, and trained up in all kinds of rapine and disobedience, required the most strict command. Alexander could neither endure their tumultuary service, nor they his regular discipline. Maximin, an old and experienced commander, hoping to profit by their discontents, held frequent conferences with the soldiers, and inflamed the sedition. At length, being determined to have a new master, they sent an executioner into the emperor's tent, who immediately struck off his head; and, shortly after, that of his mother. He died in the twenty ninth year of his age, after a glorious reign of thirteen years, which, from his virtues, deserved to have been protracted to a much longer period.

CHAP. XXI.

The Reigns of Maximin, Pupienus and Balbinus, Gordian, Philip, Dacius, Gallus, Valerian, Galienus, Claudius, Aurelian, Tacitus, Probus, Carus, Dioclesian, Constantius, and Galerius.

THE tumults occasioned by the death of Alexander, being appeased, Maximin, who had been the chief promoter of the sedition, was chosen emperor. This extraordinary man was born of very obscure parentage, being the son of a poor herdsman in Thrace. Early in life he followed his father's humble profession, and only exercised his personal strength against the robbers who infested that part of the country. Soon after, his ambition increasing, he enlisted in the Roman army, where he soon became remarkable for his great strength, discipline and courage. He was no less than eight feet and a half high, and his form corresponded to his size, he being not more remarkable for the magnitude, than the symmetry of his person. His strength was so great, that he was able to draw a carriage which two oxen could not move: he could strike out a horse's teeth, with a blow of his fist; and break its thigh with a kick. He generally ate forty pounds weight of flesh every day, and drank six gallons of wine, without committing any debauch in either. With a frame so athletic, he was possessed of a mind undaunted and independent. He was first noticed

ticed when the emperor Severus was celebrating games on the birth-day of his son Geta. Maximin, at that time a rude countryman, requested the emperor to be permitted to contend for the prizes which were distributed to the best runners, wrestlers, and boxers of the army. Severus, unwilling to infringe the military discipline, would not permit him at first, as he was a Thracian peasant, to combat, except with slaves, against whom his strength appeared astonishing. He overcame sixteen in running, one after the other: he then kept up with the emperor on horseback: and having fatigued him in the course, he was opposed to seven of the most active soldiers, and overcame them with the greatest ease.

From that time he was particularly favoured, and taken into the emperor's body guard, in which his assiduity and prompt obedience were particularly remarkable. In the reign of Caracalla he was made a centurion, and distinguished himself in that station by his strict attention to the morals and discipline of his company. When made a tribune, he still retained the hardy simplicity of his life; eat as the meanest centinel; spent whole days in exercising the troops; and would sometimes wrestle with eight or ten of the strongest men in the army, whom he threw with scarcely any effort. Having thus become one of the most remarkable men in the empire, for courage, discipline, and personal activity, he gave shortly after a very high instance of his unshaken fidelity: for when Macrinus was made emperor, he refused to serve under a prince who had betrayed his sovereign, and retired to Thrace, his native country, where

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he followed commerce. Upon the accession of Heliogabalus to the throne, this bold veteran once more joined the army; but being very soon disgusted at the base effeminacy of the emperor, he then left the court. Heliogabalus being cut off, he again returned to Rome, and was received with great kindness by Alexander, who particularly recommended him to the senate, and made him commander of a legion of new raised soldiers. Maximin gladly accepted of this charge, and performed his duty with great exactness and success, setting an example of virtue and discipline to all the commanders of the army. Nor was his valour less apparent against the Germans, whither he was sent with his legion; so that he was unanimously considered as the boldest, bravest, most valiant, and most virtuous soldier in the whole empire: qualities and titles which he soon forfeited, when he was elevated to a throne.

Having assumed the purple, he began immediately to extort obedience from every rank of people, and to vindicate his authority by violence. The senate and people of Rome were the first that incurred his resentment, as they utterly refused to confirm the election of the army; so that he was the first emperor who reigned without their concurrence or approbation. However, he seemed regardless of their opposition, proceeding to secure his power by putting to death all who had been raised by his predecessor. The Christians also, who had found favour in the former reign, felt the weight of his resentment, and were persecuted in several parts of the empire. His cruelty likewise extended to the rich, whose lives and estates be-

came

came a frequent sacrifice to avarice and suspicion. But what reflects eternal disgrace on his memory, is his commanding his early friends, and the friends of his parents, to be slain, that the meanness of his extraction might be the better concealed.

However, his cruelties did not retard his military operations, which were carried on with a spirit becoming a better monarch. He overthrew
A. D. 236. the Germans in several battles, wasted their country with fire and sword for four hundred miles together, and formed a resolution of subduing all the northern nations as far as the ocean. In these expeditions, to attach the soldiers more firmly to him, he increased their pay; and in every duty of the camp, he himself took as much pains as the meanest sentinel in his army. Wherever the conflict was hottest, Maximin was always seen fighting there in person, and destroying all before him: for, according to the notions in which he had been bred, he considered it as his duty to combat as a common soldier, while he commanded as a general.

In the mean time, his cruelties had so alienated the minds of his subjects, that several conspiracies were secretly aimed against him. Magnus, a consular person, and some others, had plotted to break down a wooden bridge, as soon as the emperor should have passed it, and thus to abandon him to the enemy. But this being discovered, gave Maximin an opportunity of indulging his natural severity; and he, upon this pretext alone, caused above four thousand to be slain. Shortly after, some of Alexander's veteran soldiers withdrawing themselves from the camp,

camp, proclaimed one Quarcianus as emperor, whom, in fact, they had constrained to accept of the dangerous superiority to which he was exposed. But, the person who had been the promoter of his advancement, murdered him in his bed, and carried his head to Maximin, who received him kindly at first, but soon put him to a cruel but just death.

These partial insurrections were soon after followed by a spirit of general discontent throughout the empire. The provinces of Africa were the first that shewed their detestation of the tyrant, whose extortions and cruelties among them had become insupportable. They first slew his procurator, and afterwards, reflecting on their danger, resolved to throw off all expectations of pardon, and create a new emperor. Gordian was then pro-consul of Africa, a person of great fame for his virtues, and greatly reverenced for a blameless life of near eighty years; and him they determined to elect. Gordian, at first, utterly refused their offer, alleging his extreme age, and Maximin's power; but all his opposition was vain; they forced him to accept the proffered dignity, and he, with his son Gordian, who was forty-six years of age, were declared emperors. Being thus raised, contrary to his inclinations, the old man immediately wrote to the senate, declaring that he had unwillingly accepted the empire, and would only keep his authority till he had freed it from the tyranny of his present oppressor. The senate very joyfully confirmed his election, adjudging Maximin an enemy and traitor to the state. The citizens shewed equal zeal in the cause; they flew upon

upon such as were even the reputed friends of Maximin, and tore them in pieces. The senate now resolved to drive their opposition to the extreme; and accordingly made all necessary preparations for their security, ordered Maximin's governors to be displaced, and commanding all the provinces to acknowledge Gordian for emperor. This injunction was differently received in different parts, as people were affected to one or the other party. In some provinces the governors were slain; in others, the messengers of the senate; so that all parts of the empire felt the consequences of the civil war.

When Maximin was informed of this revolution, his rage appeared ungovernable. He roared like a savage beast, and violently struck his head against the wall, shewing every instance of ungovernable distraction. At length, his fury being somewhat subsided, he called his whole army together; and, in a set speech, exhorted them to revenge his cause, giving them the strongest assurances, that they should possess the estates of all such as had offended. The soldiers unanimously promised to be faithful; they received his harangue with their usual acclamations, and, thus encouraged, he led them towards Rome, breathing nothing but slaughter and revenge. However, he found many obstacles to his impetuosity; from the disorderly conduct of his army, and the hatred of the cities through which he passed, the inhabitants all abandoning their houses upon his approach, and concealing their provisions. Yet, under this complication of inconveniences and misfortunes, his affairs began to wear a favourable appearance in Africa;

Africa; for Capelianus, the govenor of Numidia, raised a body of troops in his favour, fought the younger Gordian, slew him, and destroyed his army. The father hearing of the death of his son, together with the loss of the battle, strangled himself in his own girdle; and Capelianus, pursuing his victory, entered Carthage, where he gave a loose to pillage and slaughter, under a pretence of revenging the cause of Maximin. The news of these successes was soon brought to the emperor, who now increased his diligence, and flattered himself with a speedy opportunity of revenge; while nothing could exceed the consternation of the senate at this conjuncture. They now saw themselves not only deprived of the assistance of Gordian and his son, on whom they greatly relied, but also opposed by two formidable tyrants, each commanding a victorious army, directly marching towards Rome, and meditating nothing but vengeance. In this afflicting exigence, they assembled with great solemnity, at the temple of Jupiter, and after the most mature deliberation, chose Pupienus and Balbinus emperors conjointly. These were men who had acquired the esteem of the public both in war and peace, having commanded armies and governed provinces with great reputation; and being now appointed to oppose Maximin, they made what levies they could, both in Rome and the country. With these, Pupienus marched to stop the progress of the invaders, leaving the city to a fresh and unlooked-for calamity, occasioned by two of Maximin's soldiers being slain in the senate house. The death of these men quickly gave offence to the body of the prætorian soldiers, who instantly

 resolved

resolved to take revenge, but were opposed by the citizens; so that nothing was seen throughout Rome but tumult, slaughter, and rage. In this universal confusion the calamity was increased, by the soldiers setting the city on fire, while the wretched inhabitants were combating each other in the midst of the flames.

Maximin himself, in whose favour these seditions were promoted, did not seem to be more fortunate. Upon being informed of the new election of emperors, his fury was again renewed, and he passed the Alps, entering Italy, expecting to refresh his fatigued and famished army in that fertile part of the country. But in this he was entirely disappointed; the senate had taken such care to remove all kinds of sustenance to fortified places, that he still found himself in his former necessities, while his army began to murmur for want. To this another disappointment was added shortly after; for approaching the city of Aquileia, which he expected to enter without any difficulty, he was astonished to find it prepared for the most obstinate resistance, and resolved to hold out a regular siege, under two excellent generals, Crispinus and Menophilus, who had so well furnished it with men and ammunition, that Maximin found no small resistance, even in investing the place. His first attempt was to take the city by storm; but the besieged threw down such quantities of scalding pitch and sulphur upon his soldiers, that they were unable to continue the assault. He then determined upon a blockade; but the inhabitants were so resolute, that even the old men and children were seen combating upon the walls, while the women cut off their

hair,

hair, to furnish the soldiers with bow-strings, Maximin's rage, at this unexpected opposition, knew no bounds: having no enemy to wreak his vengeance upon, he turned it against his own commanders; many of whom he put to death, as if the city had held out through their neglect or incapacity. Nothing now appeared on either side to decide the contest, except the total destruction of one of them; but a mutiny in Maximin's own army, for some time rescued the declining empire from destruction, and saved the lives of thousands. The soldiers long harassed by famine and fatigue, and hearing of revolts on every side, resolved to terminate their calamities by the tyrant's death. His great strength, and being always armed, were, at first, the principal reasons to deter any from assassinating him; but at length having made his guards A. D.
accomplices in their design, they set upon 238.
him, while he slept at noon in his tent, and slew both him and his son, whom he had U. C.
made his partner in the empire, without op- 996.
position, and threw their bodies to the dogs. Thus died this very remarkable man, after a bloody reign of about three years, and in the sixty-fifth year of his age. His assiduity when in a humble station, and his cruelty when in power, serve to evince that there are some men whose virtues are fitted for obscurity, as there are others who only shew themselves great when placed in an exalted station.

Pupienus and Balbinus continued for some time to discharge the duties of their station, without opposition; but the prætorian soldiers, who had long been notorious for mutiny and treason, soon

resolved on farther change Nor did the dissensions between the new-made emperors themselves a little contribute to their downfal; for, though both were remarkable for wisdom and age, yet they could not restrain the mutual jealousy of each other's power. Pupienus claimed the superiority from his great experience; while Balbinus was equally aspiring, upon account of his family and fortune.

In this ill-judged contest, the prætorian soldiers, who were the enemis of both, set upon them in their palace, at a time when their guards were amused with seeing the Capitoline games. Pupienus, perceiving their tumultuous approach, sent with the utmost speed, for assistance from his colleague; but he, out of a culpable suspicion, that something was designed against himself, refused his aid till it was too late. Thus, the seditious soldiers found easy access to the apartments of both, and dragging them from the palace towards the camp, immediately dispatched them, leaving their dead bodies in the streets.

In the midst of this sedition, as the mutineers were proceeding along, they met by accident Gordian, the grandson of him who was slain in Africa, and declared him emperor on the spot. The senate and people had been long reduced to the necessity of suffering their emperors to be nominated by the army, so that all they could do, in the present instance, was to confirm their choice. This prince was no more than sixteen years old when he began his reign; but, his virtues seemed to compensate for his want of experience. His principal aims were, to unite the opposing members of the government, and to reconcile

reconcile the soldiers and citizens to each other. His learning is said to have been equal to his virtues; and we are assured that he had sixty-two thousand books in his library. His respect for Misithæus, his governor and instructor, was such, that he married his daughter, and profited by his counsels, in all the critical circumstances of his reign.

The first four years of this emperor's reign were attended with the utmost prosperity; but in the fifth, he was alarmed with accounts from the East, that Sapor, king of Persia, had furiously invaded the confines of the Roman empire, and having taken Antioch, had pillaged Syria, and all the adjacent provinces. The Goths also invaded the empire on their side, pouring down like an inundation from the north, and attempting to fix their residence in the kingdom of Thrace. To oppose both these invasions, Gordian assembled an army; and having gained some victories over the Goths, whom he obliged to retire, he turned his arms against the Persians, whom he also defeated, and forced to return home with disgrace. In obtaining these advantages, Misithæus, whom he had made prætorian præfect, had the principal share; his wisdom directed to success, and his courage insured it. But he dying soon after, as it is supposed of poison, administered by Philip, an Arabian, who was appointed his successor, the fortunes of Gordian changed. The army began to be no longer supplied with provisions as usual; murmurs were heard to prevail, and these were artfully fomented by Philip. Things thus proceeded from bad to worse: Philip was, at first, made equal in the command of the empire; shortly after, he was

 invested

invested with the sole power. And, he, at length, finding himself capable of perpetrating his long-meditated cruelty, Gordian was slain by his order, in the twenty-second year of his age, after a successful reign of nearly six years, in which he had done much to merit respect, and little to deserve censure.

A. D. 244. U. C. 992. Philip having thus dispatched his benefactor, was immediately acknowledged emperor by the army, when about forty years of age. The senate also, though they seemed at first to oppose his power, confirmed his election, and gave him, as usual, the title of Agustus. Upon his exaltation, he associated his son, a boy of six years of age, as his partner in the empire; and, in order to secure his power at home, made peace with the Persians, and marched his army towards Rome. On his way, having conceived a desire to visit his native country of Arabia, he built there a city called Philippopolis; and thence returning to Rome, he was received as emperor, and treated with all the marks of submission though not of joy. To put the people in good humour, he caused the secular games to be celebrated, with a magnificence superior to that of any of his predecessors, it being just a thousand years from the building of the city. Upon occasion of these games, it is said, that both Philip and his son were converted to Christianity; but a murderer, as well as an ungrateful usurper, can do little honour to any faith.

From the wretched and mutilated histories of the times, we further learn that the Goths, renewing their invasions, Marinus, Philip's lieutenant, who was sent against them, revolted, and caused

caused himself to be declared emperor. This defection, however, was but of short duration: for the army which had raised him, repenting of their rashness, deposed and put him to death. Decius was appointed by Philip to command the army which had been guilty of this revolt. He was a man of great subtilty; and being thus entrusted with so much power, upon arriving at the army, found that the soldiers were resolved to invest him with supreme authority. He, therefore, seemed to suffer their importunities, as if through constraint; and, in the mean time, made professions to Philip, that he had unwillingly assumed the title of emperor, the better to secure it to the rightful possessor; adding, that he only looked for a convenient opportunity of giving up his pretentions and title together. Philip, however, knew mankind too well to be cajoled by such artifices: he therefore got together what forces he could, from the several provinces, and led them forward towards the confines of Italy. But, this army was scarcely arrived at Verona, when it revolted in favour of Decius, and it setting violently upon Philip, one of the sentinels at a blow cleft his head in twain.

Such was the deserved death of Philip, in the forty-fifth year of his age, after a reign of about five years.

The activity and wisdom of Decius, who met with no opposition in his claims, seemed in some measure to stop the hastening decline of the Roman empire. The senate thought so highly of his merits, that they voted him not inferior to Trajan; and indeed he seemed, in every instance to consult their dignity in particular, and the

A.D. 249.

the welfare of all the inferior ranks of people Among other concessions, he permitted them to elect a censor, as was the custom in the flourishing times of Rome; and Valerian, his general, a man of such strict morals, that his life was said to be a continual censorship, was chosen to that dignity.

But no virtues could now prevent the approaching downfal of the state; the obstinate disputes between the Pagans and the Christians within the empire, and the unceasing irruptions of barbarous nations from without, enfeebled it beyond the power of a remedy. To check these, as it was vainly hoped, a furious persecution of the Christians, who were now the most numerous body of the people, was begun; in which thousands were put to death, and all the arts of cruelty ineffectually tried to lessen their growing numbers.

This impolitic and unjust persecution was succeeded by a dreadful devastation from the Goths, particularly in Thrace and Mœsia. These irruptions Decius went to oppose in person, and coming to an engagement, slew thirty thousand of the barbarians in one battle. At length he was led, by the treachery of Gallus, his own general, into a defile, where the king of the Goths had secret information to attack him. In this disadvantageous situation, Decius first saw his son killed with an arrow, and soon after his whole army totally put to the rout; and then, in an agony of despair, he put spurs to his horse, and instantly plunging into a quagmire, was swallowed up. He died in the fiftieth year of his age, after a short reign of two years and six months, leaving the character of an excellent

cellent prince, had he been called to power in happier times.

The treacherous Gallus had sufficient address to get himself declared emperor by that part of the army which survived the defeat he had occasioned; and his title was acquiesced in by senate and people. A.D. 251. U.C. 1004.
He was forty-five years old when he began to reign, and was descended from an honourable family in Rome. He was the first who bought a dishonourable peace from the enemies of the state, agreeing to pay a considerable annual tribute to the Goths, to purchase their forbearance. Having thus obtained a short remission from war, by the disgrace of his country, he returned to Rome, to give a loose to his pleasures, regardless of the duties of his station.

Nothing can be more deplorable than the state of the Roman provinces at this period. The Goths, and other barbarous nations, not satisfied with their late bribes to continue in peace, rushed like a torrent upon the eastern parts of Europe. On the other side, the Persians and Scythians committed unheard of ravages in Mesopotamia and Syria. The emperor, regardless of every national calamity, was lost in debauch and sensuality at home; and the Pagans were permitted to persecute the Christians without restraint. These calamities were succeeded by a dreadful pestilence, which seems to have spread over every part of the earth, and continued raging for several years: and as if these accumulated ills had not been enough, a civil war followed shortly after, between Gallus and his general Æmilianus, who having gained a victory over the Goths, was proclaimed emperor, by his conquering

quering army. Gallus, hearing this, soon roused from the intoxication of pleasure, and prepared to oppose his dangerous rival. Both armies met in Mœsia, and a battle ensued, in which Æmilianus was victorious, and Gallus, with his son, were slain. He died in the forty-seventh year of his age, after a disgraceful reign of two years and four months, in which the empire suffered inexpressible misery.

A.D. 253. Æmilius, after his victory over Gallus, expected to be proclaimed emperor; but the senate refused to acknowledge his claims; and an army which was stationed near the Alps, chose Valerian, their own commander, to succeed to the throne. In consequence of this, Æmilianus's soldiers began to consider their general as an obstacle to the universal tranquillity, and slew him to avoid the mischiefs of a civil war.

Valerian being thus universally acknowledged as emperor, though at the age of seventy, set about reforming the state with a spirit that seemed to mark a good mind and unabated vigour. But reformation was now almost impracticable: the disputes between the Pagans and Christians divided the empire as before; and a dreadful persecution of the latter ensued. The northern nations overran the Roman dominions in a more formidable manner than ever; and the empire began to be usurped by a multitude of petty leaders, each of whom, neglecting the general interest of the state, set up for himself. To add to these calamities, the Persians, under their king Sapor, invaded Syria, and coming into Mesopotamia, took the unfortunate Valerian prisoner, as he was making preparations

parations to oppose them. Nothing can exceed the indignities, as well as the cruelties, which were practised upon this unhappy monarch, in his captivity. Sapor, we are told, always used him as a footstool for mounting his horse; and adding the bitterness of ridicule to his insults; usually observed, "that such an attitude was the best statue that could be erected in honour of his victory." This horrid life of insult and sufferance continued for seven years, and was at length terminated, by the cruel Persian's commanding his prisoner's eyes to be plucked out, and afterwards causing him to be flead alive, when his skin was dyed red, and exposed in a temple, to the ignominy of the Roman name, and the eternal disgrace of Sapor.

A. D. 259.

No sooner had Valerian been taken prisoner, when Galienus, his son, promising to revenge the insult, was chosen emperor, being then about forty-one years old. However, he soon discovered that he sought rather his own gratification than the liberation of his father, or toils of empire; for, after having overthrown Ingenuus, who had assumed the title of emperor, he sat down, as if fatigued with conquest, and gave himself up to ease and luxury; While the empire was afflicted throughout with pestilence and famine; while the Germans overran Rhætia; while the Allemans wasted Gaul; while the Goths, the Quadi, and Sarmatians, poured fourth from their forests, and carried desolation every where, Galienus remained in the utmost tranquillity at Rome, inventing new pleasures, bathing among prostitutes, and diverting himself among mimics, parasites, and buffoons. When informed of the loss of his provinces,

vinces, or the calamities of the state, he usually answered with a jest; and in a short time his own power was little more than a mere mockery.

Indeed, no less than thirty pretenders were seen contending with each other for the dominion of the state, and adding the calamities of civil war to the rest of the misfortunes of this devoted empire. These are generally known in history by the name of the Thirty Tyrants. Historians are divided as to their number, names, and pretensions; it only appears, in the ill-digested accounts of these times, that they were not all contemporary, but succeeded each other whenever they found opportunity of asserting their pretensions. It will be needless to dilate upon accounts and characters, that have nothing very remarkable to preserve them from oblivion; nor are their names worthy of being recorded.

Suffice it to remark, that a state, harrassed by such a number of clashing interests, and hostile armies, was in the most dreadful situation; and accordingly we find through all parts of the empire, nothing but rapine, murder, and desolation; the government, like a mighty ruin, dropping by peace-meal on the heads of those it was originally raised to protect, and threatening every moment universal destruction. In this general calamity, Galienus, though at first seemingly sensible, was, at length, obliged, for his own private security, to take the field, and led an army to besiege the city of Milan, which had been taken by one of the thirty usurping tyrants. It was there he was slain by his own soldiers, through the intrigues of Martian, who had conspired against him.

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The death of Galienus gave satisfaction to all, except his soldiers, who hoped to reap the reward of their treachery in the plunder of Milan. Being frustrated in these expectations, and, in some measure, kept within bounds, by the largesses of Martian, they nominated Flavius Claudius emperor, and his title was joyfully confirmed by the senate and the people. A. D. 268. U.C. 1021.

Of the parentage and country of Claudius, nothing is certainly known; but whatever they might be, his merits were by no means doubtful. He was a man of great valour and conduct, having performed the most excellent services against the Goths, who had long continued to make their irruptions into the empire. He was now about fifty-five years old, equally remarkable for the strength of his body and the vigour of his mind; he was chaste and temperate, a rewarder of the good, and a severe punisher of such as transgressed the laws. Thus endowed, he in some measure arrested the decline of the empire, and, seemed to restore a portion of the glory of Rome.

This first success, upon being made emperor, was against Aureolus, an usurper of the empire, whom he defeated near Milan. His next expedition was to oppose the Goths, against whom he led a very numerous army. These barbarians had made their principal and most successful irruptions into Thrace and Macedonia, swarmed over all Greece, and had pillaged the famous city of Athens, long the school of the polite arts to the Romans themselves. The Goths had no veneration for these embellishments, that tend to soften

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and humanise the mind, but destroyed all monuments of taste and learning with the most savage alacrity. It was upon one of these occasions, that having heaped together a large pile of books, in order to burn them, one of their commanders dissuaded them from the design, alleging, "that the time which the Grecians wasted on books, rendered them the less fit for war." Not only in Greece, but in almost every quarter, the empire seemed to totter on its base. At the same time, above three hundred thousand of the Heruli, the Trutangi, the Vuturgi, and many nameless and uncivilized nations, came down the river Danube, with two thousand ships, fraught with men and ammunition, spreading terror and devastation on every side.

In this state of universal dismay, Claudius alone seemed to continue unshaken. He marched his disproportioned army against the savage invaders, and though but ill-prepared for engaging with them, he came off victorious, and made incredible slaughter of the enemy. The whole of their army were either cut to pieces or taken prisoners; houses were filled with their arms, and scarcely was there a province of the empire that was not furnished with slaves, from those that survived the defeat.

These successes were followed by many others in different parts of the empire; so that the Goths, for a considerable time, made but a feeble opposition.

Some time after, Claudius marched against the revolted Germans, and overthrew them with considerable slaughter. His last expedition was to oppose Tetricus and Zenobia, his two most powerful

powerful rivals in the empire. But, on his march, as he approached near the city Sirmium, in Pannonia, he was seized with a pestilential fever, of which he died in a few days, to the great regret of his subjects, and the irreparable loss of the Roman Empire. His reign, which was not of quite two year's continuance, was active and successful; and such is the character given of him by historians, that he is said to have united in himself, the moderation of Augustus, the valour of Trajan, and the piety of Antoninus.

Immediately after the lamented death of Claudius, the army made choice of Aurelian, who was at that time master of the horse, and esteemed the most valiant commander of his time. His promotion was not without opposition on the part of the senate, as Quintillius, the brother of the deceased emperor, put in his claim, and was, for a while, acknowledged at Rome. But, his authority was of a very short duration; for, finding himself abandoned by those who at first instigated him to declare for the throne, he prevented the severity of his rival, by a voluntary death.

A. D. 270.

U. C. 1023.

Aurelian, being now universally acknowledged by all the states of the empire, assumed the command with a greater share of power than his predecessors had for some time enjoyed. He was born of mean and obscure parentage in Dacia, and was about fifty-five years old at the time of his coming to the throne. The early part of his life he had spent in the army, and had risen through all the gradations of military duty. He was of unshaken courage and amazing strength; for, in a single engagement, he

 killed

killed forty of the enemy with his own hand, and above nine hundred at several different times.

The whole of this enterprising monarch's reign was spent in repressing the irruptions of the northern nations, in humbling every other pretender to the empire, and punishing the monstrous irregularities of his own subjects. He defeated the Marcomanni, a fierce and terrible nation of Germany, that had invaded Italy, in three several engagements; and at length totally destroyed the whole army. He was no less successful against Zenobia, the queen of the East, a woman of the most heroic qualifications, who had long disclaimed the Roman power, and established an empire of her own. To oppose this extraordinary woman, Aurelian led his army into Asia, and surmounting all the obstructions that were opposed against him, he at length sat down before Tyana, a city of Cappadocia, which seemed resolved to hold out against him, and actually, for some time, stopped his progress. The unexpected obstinacy of the besieged, served not a little to enrage the emperor, who was naturally precipitate and furious. He vowed, that upon taking the city, he would so punish the inhabitants, as not to leave a dog alive among them. After some time the city was taken: and when his whole army expected the plunder of so wealthy a place, and reminded him of his former protestations, he restrained their impetuosity, and only ordered all the dogs in the place to be destroyed. He afterwards pretended that he was restrained from satiating his resentment on the inhabitants, by an apparition of the famous Apollonius, who warned

warned him not to destroy his birth-place. This excuse was no doubt fictitious; but we can pardon falsehood, when it is brought to the aid of humanity.

From Tyana he marched to meet the enemy, who waited his approach, near the city of Emesa in Syria. Both armies were very powerful and numerous: the one trained up under the most valiant leader of his time; the other led on by a woman, who seemed born to control the pride of man. The battle was long and obstinate: victory for some time inclined to the side of the Asiatics; but the perseverance of Aurelian's generals at last carried the day; and Zenobia was obliged to flee to Palmyra for safety. The conqueror soon pursued her thither, and did all in his power to induce her submission; but the haughty queen refused his proffered terms of life and security with scorn, relying on the succours which she expected from the Persians, the Saracens, and the Armenians. Aurelian's diligence surmounted every obstacle; he intercepted the Persian auxiliaries and dispersed them; the Saracens shared the same fate; and the Armenians were, by plausible promises, induced to espouse his interest. Zenobia, deceived in her expected succours, and despairing of relief, attempted to escape into Persia, but was taken in her flight. The city of Palmyra submitted to the conqueror; and Longinus, the celebrated critic, and secretary to the queen, was by Aurelian's order put to death, which he met with a sublimity equal to his writings. Zenobia was reserved to grace his triumph, and was afterwards allotted such lands, and such an income, as served to maintain her in almost all her former splendor.

Aurelian having restored peace to the empire, endeavoured, by the strictest justice, to bring back virtue also. He was rigid in punishing the crimes of the soldiery; and took care that the peasantry should not be plundered, upon any pretence, of the smallest article of their property.

In executing justice, he frequently degenerated into cruelty; but the vices of the times, in some measure, required it. In the punishments he inflicted on the guilty, or those who were reputed so, the Christians were sharers. Against these, he drew up several letters and edicts, preparatory to a very severe persecution; but, if we may believe the credulous historians of the times, he was deterred, just as he was going to sign them. by a thunderbolt, which fell so near his person, that his escape was judged miraculous.

But, however Heaven might have interposed on this occasion, it is certain, that his severities, were, at last the cause of his destruction. Menetheus, his principal secretary, having been threatened by him, began to consider how he might elude the blow. For this purpose, he forged a roll of the names of several persons, whom he pretended the emperor had marked out for death, adding his own, to strengthen him in the confidence of the party. The scroll, thus contrived, was shewn, with an air of the utmost secrecy, to some of the persons concerned; and they, to procure their safety, immediately agreed with him to destroy the emperor. This resolution was soon put into execution; for, as Aurelian passed with a small guard, from Uraclea in Thrace, towards Byzantium, the conspirators set upon him, and put

him

him to death. He was slain in the sixtieth, or, as some say, the sixty-third year of his age, after a very active reign of almost five years.

A. D. 276.

The death of Aurelian was so unexpected, and he had taken off such a number of competitors, that no one would now venture to declare himself a candidate; and, on the other side, the senate declined the choice; so that a space of near eight months elapsed in the interchange of mutual deference. At length, the senate made choice of Tacitus, a man of great merit, and no way ambitious of the honours that were offered him. Upon being solicited to accept the empire, he at first refused, and retired to his country-house in Campania, to avoid their importunities; but being at length prevailed upon, he accepted the reins of government, being at that time seventy-five years old.

One of the first acts of his government was to punish those who had conspired against the late emperor; particularly Menestheus, who was impaled alive, and his body thrown to wild beasts. During this reign, the senate seem to have exercised a considerable share of authority. When he endeavoured to obtain the consulship for his brother Probus, the senate refused their consent; at which he seemed no way moved, but calmly remarked, that they best knew whom to choose. This moderation prevailed in all the rest of his conduct: he was extremely temperate; his table was plain, and furnished with nothing expensive; he even prohibited his empress from wearing jewels, and forbade the use of gold and embroidery. He was fond of learning, and the memory of such men as had deserved well of their country; particularly, the

works

works of his namesake Tacitus, the historian, were greatly honoured by him. He commanded that they should be placed in every public library throughout the empire, and that many copies of them should be transcribed at the public charge.

A reign begun with such moderation and justice, only wanted continuance to have made the empire happy; but, after enjoying the empire about six months, he died of a fever in his march to oppose the Persians and Scythians, who had invaded the eastern parts of the empire.

On the demise of Tacitus, the army was divided in the choice of an emperor; one part chose Florian, brother to the deceased; but the majority were for some time undetermined. They alleged, in their conferences with each other, the necessity of electing one eminent for valour, honesty, piety, clemency, and probity: but the last virtue being that chiefly insisted upon, the whole army, as if by common consent, cried out, that Probus should be emperor. He was accordingly confirmed in this dignity, with the usual solemnities; and Florian, his opponent, finding himself deserted, even by those legions who had promised to stand up in his support, opened his arteries, and bled to death.

Probus was forty-four years old when he ascended the throne; he was born of noble parentage at Sirmium in Pannonia, and bred up a soldier from his youth. He began early to distinguish himself for his discipline and valour: being frequently the first man that, in besieging towns, scaled the walls, or burst into the enemy's camp. He was equally remarkable for

single

single combats, and saving the lives of many eminent citizens. Nor were his activity and courage, when elected to the empire, less apparent than in his private station. Every year now produced only new calamities to the empire; and fresh irruptions on every side threatened universal desolation; to oppose which, all the abilities of Probus were scarcely sufficient. He hastened, however, with an army to repress the Germans in Gaul, of whom he slew four hundred thousand. He then marched into Dalmatia, to oppose and subdue the Sarmatians. From thence he led his forces into Thrace, and compelled the Goths to sue for peace. He afterwards turned his arms towards Asia, subdued the province of Isauria; and, marching onwards, conquered a people called the Blemii, who, leaving their native forests of Æthiopia, had possessed themselves of Arabia and Judæa. Narsius also, the king of Persia, submitted at his approach; and upon his return into Europe, he divided the depopulated parts of Thrace among its barbarous invaders:—a circumstance that afterwards produced great calamities in the empire.

The diligence of Probus was not less conspicuous in suppressing intestine commotions. Saturnius, being compelled by the Egyptians to declare himself emperor, was defeated and slain. Proculus also, a person remarkable only for his great attachment to women, set up against the emperor, but being compelled to fly, was at length delivered up by the Germans. At the same time Bonosus, equally remarkable as a votary to Bacchus, rebelled, and, being overcome, hanged himself in despair. Probus, when

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he saw him, immediately after his death, could not avoid pointing at the body, and saying, "There hangs not a man, but a bottle." But still, notwithstanding every effort to give quiet to the empire, the barbarians who surrounded it, kept it in continual alarms. The Goths and Vandals, finding the emperor engaged in quelling domestic disputes, renewed their accustomed inroads, and once more felt the punishment of their presumption. They were conquered in several engagements, and Probus returned in triumph to Rome. His active temper, however, would not suffer him to continue at rest while he had an enemy left to conquer. In his last expedition, he led his soldiers against the Persians; and going through Sirmium, the place of his nativity, he there employed several thousands of his soldiers in draining a fen that was incommodious to the inhabitants. The fatigues of this undertaking, and the great restraint that was laid upon the licentious manner of the soldiers, produced a conspiracy, which ended in his ruin. The soldiers, taking their opportunity as he was marching into Greece, slew him, after he had reigned six years and four months with general approbation. As an instance of the esteem, which even his rebellious army had for him, they erected him a sumptuous monument with this epitaph—"Here lies the emperor Pro-
"bus, truly deserving the name; a subduer of
"barbarians, and a conqueror of usurpers."

A. D. 282. U. C. 1035. Carus, who was prætorian præfect to the deceased emperor, was chosen by the army to succeed him. To strengthen his authority, he united his two sons, Carinus and Numerian, with him in command;

mand; the former of whom was as much sullied by his vices, as the younger was remarkable for his virtues, modesty, and courage. The new emperor had scarcely time to punish the murderers of the late monarch, when he was alarmed by a fresh irruption of the Sarmatians, over whom he gained a signal victory. The Persian monarch also made some attempts upon the empire; but Carus assured his ambassadors, that if their master persisted in his obstinacy, all his fields should soon be as bare as his own bald head; which he shewed them. In consequence of this threat, he marched to the walls of Ctesiphon; and a dreadful battle ensuing, he once more gained a complete victory. What the result of this success might have been, is not known, for he was shortly after struck dead by lightning in his tent, with many of his attendants.

Numerian, the youngest son, who accompanied his father in this expedition, was inconsolable for his death, and brought such a disorder upon his eyes with weeping, that he was obliged to be carried along with the army, shut up in a close litter. The peculiarity of his situation, after some time, excited the ambition of Aper, his father-in-law, who supposed that he could now, without any great danger, aim at the empire himself. He therefore hired a mercenary villain to murder the emperor in his litter; and the better to conceal the fact, reported that he was still alive, but unable to endure the light. In this manner was the dead body carried about for some days, Aper continuing to attend it with the utmost appearance of respect, and seeming to take orders as usual. The offensiveness, how-

ever,

ever, of its smell, at length discovered the treachery, and excited an universal uproar throughout the army. In the midst of this tumult, Dioclesan, one of the most noted commanders of his time, was chosen emperor, and with his own hand slew Aper; having thus, as it is said, fulfilled a prophecy which declared, that Dioclesian should be emperor after he had slain a boar.

Carinus, the remaining son, did not long survive his father and brother; for he giving himself up to his vices, and yet, at the same time, opposing the new-made emperor, the competitors led their forces into Mœsia, where Dioclesian being victorious, Carinus was slain by a tribune of his own army, whose wife he had formerly violated.

A. D. 284. The parentage of Dioclesian was mean; being supposed, according to some, the son of a scrivener; and of a slave, according to others; and was born at Dioclea, whence he received his name. He was about forty years old when he was elected to the empire, and owed his exaltation entirely to his merit; having passed through all the gradations of office, with sagacity, courage, and success. Nor did the beginning of his reign, in the least, deceive the expectations his subjects had formed in his favour. He pardoned all his enemies who had joined with Carinus, without injuring either their fortunes or honours. Conscious also that the weight of the empire was too heavy for one alone to sustain, he admitted Maximian, his general, as a partner in the government. Thus mutually assisting each other, they continued to live in strict friendship: and, though somewhat differing in temper, yet they concurred in promoting

the general good, and humbling their enemies, which at this period were very numerous and formidable.

The peasants and labourers in Gaul excited a dangerous insurrection, under the conduct of Amandus and Helianus, but were subdued by Maximian. Achilleus, who commanded in Egypt, proclaimed himself emperor; and it was not without many bloody engagements, that he was overcome, and condemned by Dioclesian to be devoured by lions. In Africa, the Roman legions, in like manner, supported by the natives, seized the public revenus, and plundered the loyal. These were also subdued by Maximian; and after a long, dubious war, were constrained to sue for peace. About the same time, Carausius, a principal commander in Britain, proclaimed himself emperor, and possessed himself of the island. To oppose this general's claims, Maximian made choice of Constantius Chlorus, whom he created Cæsar, and married to Theodora, his daughter-in-law. He, upon his arrival in Britain, finding Carausius extremely polictic, and continually reinforced from Germany, thought proper to come to an accomodation; so that this usurper continued for seven years in quiet possession of the whole island, till he was slain by Alectus, his friend and intimate, About this time, also, Narsius, king of Persia and Parthia, began a dangerous war upon the empire, and invaded Mesopotamia. To stop the progress of the enemy upon this quarter, Dioclesian made choice of Galerius, surnamed Armentarius, from the report of his being the son of a cow-herd, in Dacia; and he likewise was created Cæsar. His success too

corresponded with that of the rest. The Persians were overcome in a decisive engagement, their camp plundered and taken, and the king's wives and children made prisoners of war. Of all the enemies of the Roman empire, the northern nations at this time alone remained unsubdued, and these were utterly unconquerable. Constantly at war with the Romans, they issued forth when the armies, that were to repress their invasions, were called away: and upon their return, they as suddenly withdrew into their cold, barren, and inaccessible retreats; which only themselves could endure. In this manner the Scythians, Goths, Sarmatians, Alani, Carsii, and Quadi, poured down in incredible numbers; while every defeat seemed but to increase their strength and perseverance. Of these, multitudes were taken prisoners, and sent to people the more southern parts of the empire: still greater numbers were destroyed; and though the rest were driven back to their native forests, yet they continued ever mindful of their inveterate enmity, and embraced every opportunity of renewing hostilities.

During this interval, as if the external miseries of the empire were not sufficient, the tenth and last great persecution commenced against the Christians. This is said to have exceeded all the former in severity; and such was the zeal with which it was pursued, that in an ancient inscription we are informed, "the government had effaced the name and superstition of the Christians, and had restored and propagated the worship of the gods." Their attempts, however, were but the malicious efforts of an expiring party; for Christianity soon after was established

established by law, and triumphed over the malice of all its enemies. In the midst of the troubles raised by this persecution, and of the contests that struck at the frontiers of the state, Dioclesian and Maximian surprised the world by resigning their dignities on the same day, and both retiring into private stations. Historians are much divided concerning the motives that thus induced them to give up those honours which they had purchased with so much danger. However, of this we are well assured, that one of them, Dioclesian, still preserved a dignity of sentiment in his retirement, which might induce us to believe he had no other motive but virtue for his resignation. Having retired to his birthplace, he spent his time in cultivating his garden, assuring his visitors that then only be began to enjoy the world, when he was thought by the rest of mankind to have forsaken it. Some of his friends attempting to persuade him to resume the empire, he replied, that if they knew his present happiness, they would rather endeavour to imitate than disturb it." In this contented manner he lived some time, and at last died either by poison or madness; but which is uncertain. His reign, which continued twenty years, was active and useful; and his authority, which was tinctured with severity, was well adapted to the depraved state of morals at that time.

Maximian, his partner in the empire, and in resignation, was by no means so well contented with his situation. He longed once more for power, and disturbed the two succeeding reigns with vain efforts to resume it; attempting to engage Dioclesian in the same design. Being

 obliged

obliged to leave Rome, where he had excited many tumults, he went over into Gaul, and was kindly received by Constantine, then acknowledged emperor of the West. But continuing his intrigues even there, and endeavouring to force his own daughter to destroy her husband, he was detected, and condemned to die by whatever death he should think proper: Lactantius tells us that he preferred hanging.

A.D. 305. But to resume the thread of our history. On the resignation of the two emperors, the Cæsars whom they had formerly chosen, were universally acknowledged as their successors. Constantius Chlorus, who was so called from the paleness of his complexion, was virtuous, valiant, and merciful: Galerius, on the other hand, was brave, but brutal, incontinent, and cruel. As there was such a disparity in their tempers, they readily agreed, upon coming into full power, to divide the empire; Constantius being appointed to govern the western parts, namely, Italy, Sicily, the greatest part of Africa, together with Spain, Gaul, Britain, and Germany: while Galerius had the eastern parts allotted to his share; namely, Illyricum, Pannonia, Thrace, Macedonia, all the provinces of Greece and the Lesser Asia, together with Egypt, Syria, Judea, and all other oriental countries. The greatness of the task, however, soon induced the emperors to take in two partners more. Severus and Maximin, who were created Cæsars, and assisted in conducting affairs; so that the empire was now under the guidance of four persons, all invested with supreme authority.

We are informed of but few particulars of this reign.

reign of Constantius, except a detail of his character, which appears, in every light, most amiable. Being one day reproached by Dioclesian's ambassadors for his poverty, he only intimated his wants to the people, and in a few hours the sums presented him amazed the beholders, and exceeded their highest expectations. "Learn from hence," said he then to the ambassadors, "that the love of the people is the "richest treasure; and that a prince's wealth is "never so safe as when his people are the guar-"dians of his exchequer." His mercy and justice were equally conspicuous in his treatment of the Christians, whom he would not suffer to be injured; and when, at length, he was persuaded to displace all the Christian officers of his household, who would not change their religion, he sent the few that complied away in disgrace; alleging, "that those who were not true to their God, would never be faithful to their prince."

In the second year of his reign, he passed over into Britain; and leaving his son Constantine as a hostage in the court of his partner in the empire, he took up his residence at York. There he continued in the practice of his usual virtues, till falling sick, he began to think of his appointing his son for his successor. He accordingly sent for him with all speed; and though past recovery before his arrival, received him with marks of the utmost affection; and, raising himself in his bed, gave him several useful instructions, particularly recommending the Christians to his protection. He then bequeathed the empire to his care, and crying out, "that none but the pious Constantine should succeed him," expired in his arms.

Mean-

Meanwhile, Galerius, his partner in the empire, being informed of Constantine's advancement, testified the most ungovernable rage, and was even going to condemn the messenger who brought him the account; but being dissuaded, he seemed to acquiesce in what he could not prevent, and sent him the marks of royalty; but, at the same time, declared Severus emperor in opposition to his interests.

Just about this time another pretender to the empire started up. This was Maxentius, a person of mean extraction, but very much favoured by the soldiers, whom he permitted to pillage at discretion. Thus there were several opposite interests at the same time, and all conspiring each other's downfal.

In order to oppose Maxentius, Severus led a numerous army towards the gates of Rome; but his soldiers considering against whom they were to fight, immediately abandoned him; and shortly after he put an end to his own life by opening his veins.

To revenge his death, Galerius marched into Italy, resolving to ruin the inhabitants, and to destroy the whole senate. His soldiers, however, upon their approach to the capital, began to waver in their resolutions; and he was obliged to have recourse to entreaties not to abandon him. Retiring by the same route by which he had advanced, he made Licinus, the son of a poor labourer in Dacia, Cæsar, in the room of Severus who was slain. This seemed to be th last act of his power, for shortly after he was seized with a very extraordinary and cruel disorder, which, baffling all the skill of his physicians, carried him off, after he had languished in torment for nearly the space of a year.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

